

HALO

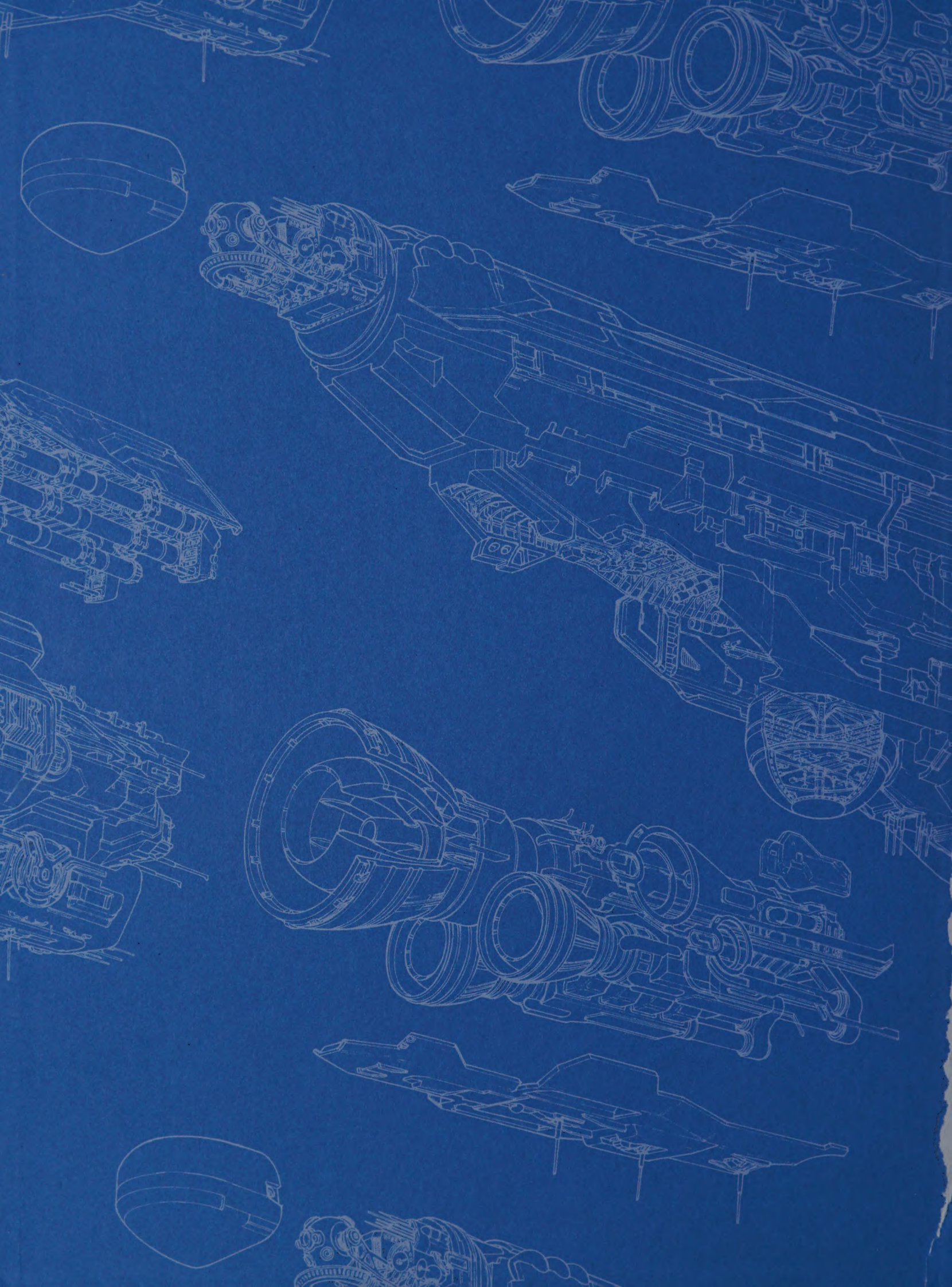
The background of the cover is a detailed illustration of a Halo battlefield. A large, white and grey UNSC Pelican dropship is shown in mid-air, tilted at an angle, with its landing gear extended. It is firing a bright orange energy weapon at a ground target. In the foreground, a dark, sleek Covenant ship is partially visible, also engaged in combat. The setting is a snowy, mountainous landscape with a large, futuristic structure in the background. The overall color palette is dominated by blues, greys, and whites, with bright orange and yellow highlights from the weapon fire.

WARFLEET

AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO THE SPACECRAFT OF HALO

WITH 10 INCREDIBLE SPACECRAFT CROSS-SECTIONS

ILLUSTRATED BY HANS JENSSEN AND JOHN R. MULLANEY



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WARFLEET

AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO THE SPACECRAFT OF HALO

EGMONT

We bring stories to life

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Written by Kenneth Peters

Edited by Craig Jelley

Cross-section illustrations by Hans Jenssen and John R. Mullaney

Additional illustrations by Darren Bacon, Isaac Hannaford and Sparth

Cover illustration by Sparth

Designed by Andrea Philpots and John Stuckey

Production by Louis Harvey

Microsoft **Studios** **343**
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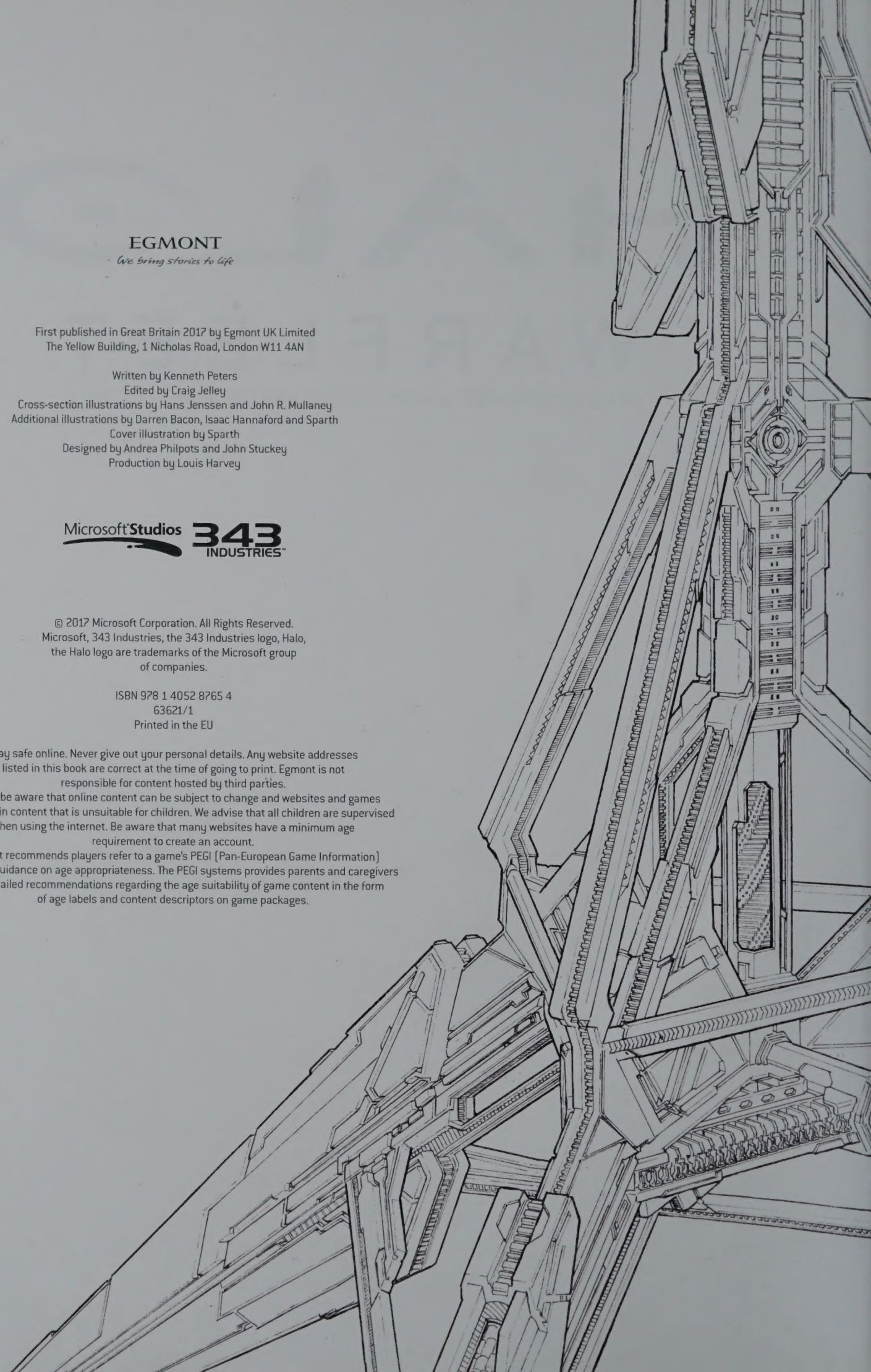
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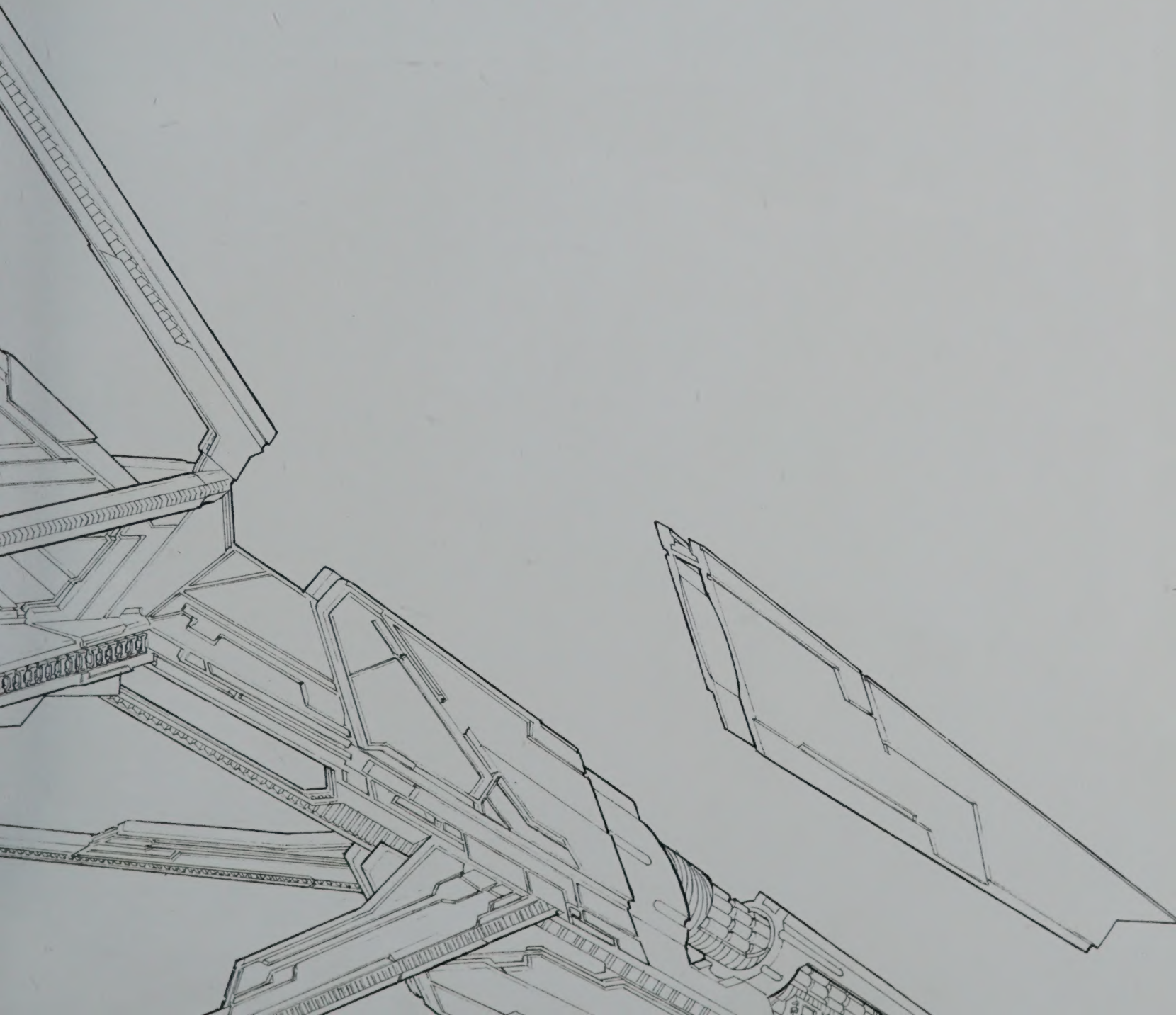
Egmont recommends players refer to a game's PEGI (Pan-European Game Information)
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of age labels and content descriptors on game packages.



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SHIP SHAPE

A FOREWORD BY FRANK O'CONNOR

What are ships in stories and in fiction? There's no doubt that they loom large in lore and legend. Proud prowed pinnacle or hard-hulled hulk, they heave to in the imaginations and legends of every culture, in every language. Even desert-bound civilizations looked to river or sea as boundary or bounty, and sought through craft and cleverness to master the water and seek new horizons.

Ships are vessels, certainly, but in history and fable, they are also characters and castles. Whether they sail the ocean or the stars, they can be home or human. A place where adventures happen, or a loyal companion on a voyage. They take names, and with those names they take on gravity that can't be denied—names that echo through time and stars and resonate like waves into the popular and literal imagination—the bold journey of the Enterprise, the fateful debut of the Titanic, Bismarck and Bounty, Yamato and Potemkin, all practically shriek adventure and action and misadventure. Victory, tragedy, and invention.

They fascinate us and compel us because they are extensions of human ingenuity. They are a symbol of our ability to overcome the challenges hurled at us by this world and those beyond. From a simple prehistoric coracle of hide and branch, to the thinking omniscient behemoths of Iain M. Banks' much-missed imagination, ships clutch at our dreams because they are conveyances of adventure, and the anchor to which drama, real and imagined, clings.

And spaceships? What are they, if not the ultimate expression of our nautical and navigational aspirations? A craft unburdened by pedestrian concerns like gravity, or the speed of light. Places where adventures can begin, end, or unfold in their entirety within the hulls and spars as they traverse the stars.



MONITORS: Artificial intelligences encased in multi-purpose armatures, Forerunner monitors govern processes that are too complex for living minds, such as maintenance of Halo rings and fleet coordination.

HALO has been around for fifteen years, and follows in a grand tradition of fictional shipbuilding. Our artists and designers and ideators have been inspired by veritable armadas of spaceborne beauty—from Buck Rogers to Space 1999, to Star Wars to Star Trek and beyond.

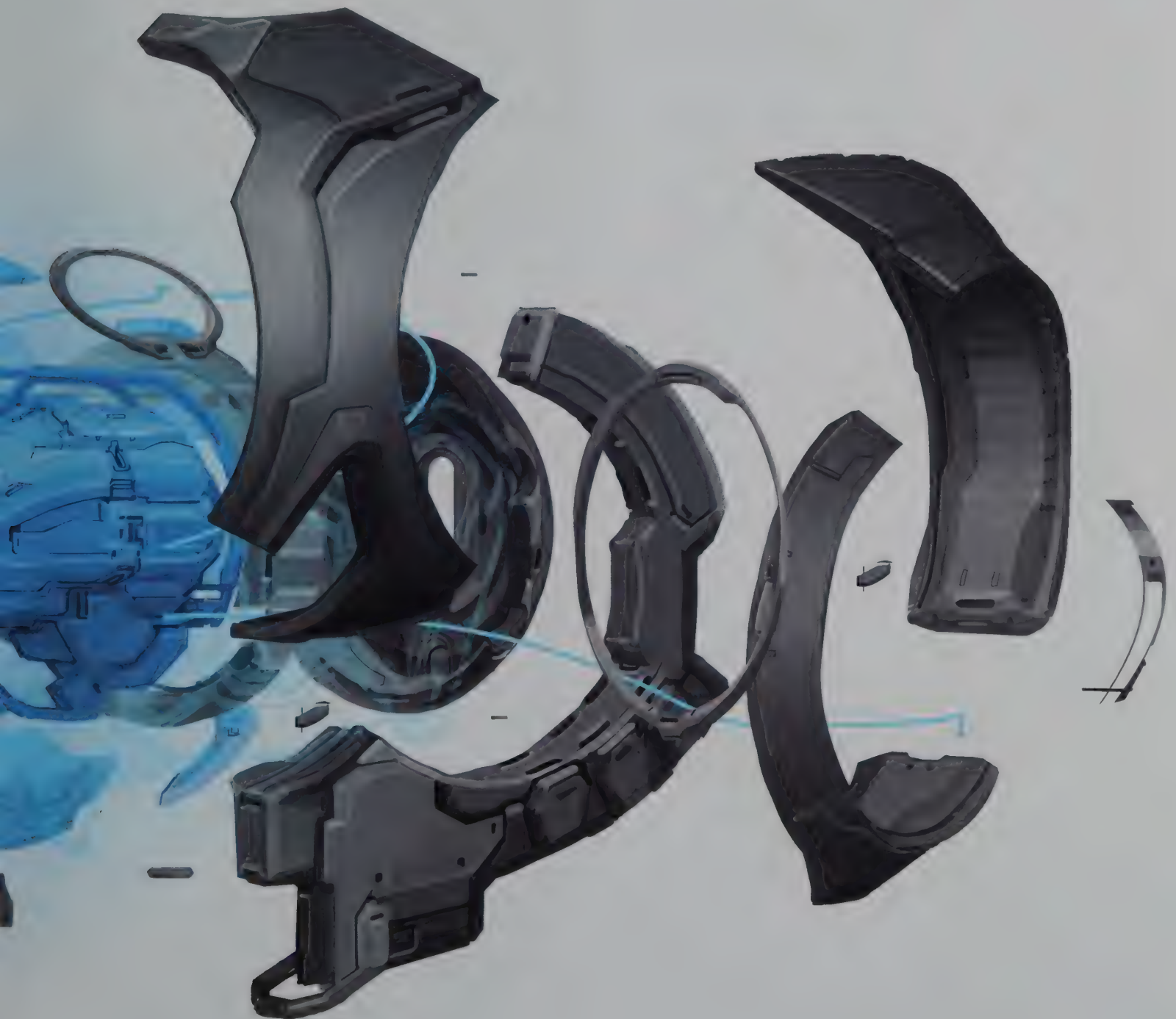
Our ships run the gamut from workmanlike single passenger Booster Frame, to the grand elegance and unimaginable power of a Forerunner starship. The needs of a game and its extended universe gave us the selfish luxury of filling out fleets of human and alien craft. And sure, maybe sometimes we got carried away in the process, building interiors that were never meant to be seen, or detailing exteriors that cameras would never capture. But like real shipbuilders of yore, we poured ourselves into them, hoping to impart a soul that would be worthy of whatever name she demanded.

We built ships for singular purpose-driven utility, personnel carriers, warships, maneuverable fighters, flying cities in the sky. We built brutish blockade runners and brigantines, curvaceous cutters and corvettes. And we loved them all.

So this book is a love letter to each and every one of them. A romantic distillation and dissection of their form and function and fantasy. An admiring gaze from the surface of a world as a glittering starship cracks open the very skein of reality, or a hushed and hypnotized tiptoe through the echoing halls of a menacing supercarrier.

So tiptoe with us as we explore the interiors and exteriors of our favorite craft. And if you see a ship that catches your eye, don't be afraid to stare.

FRANK O'CONNOR
HALO FRANCHISE CREATIVE DIRECTOR



TRAVELERS

Long before the inhabitants of Earth dreamed of living among the stars, seeds were planted on lifeless planets by alien hands, interstellar empires rose and fell, and grand battles were waged in the void of space to determine the fate of all thinking life in the Milky Way. With the invention of the slipspace drive in 2291 CE it was humanity's turn to venture to far-flung worlds and uncover secrets left behind by those who had come before.

PRECURSORS

Creatures of legend who built the foundations for sentient life in the Milky Way.

The beings known as the Precursors arrived in the Milky Way galaxy as creators and caretakers billions of years ago. Dreamers and makers whose minds transcended many realms, the Precursors seeded uncountable worlds with the building blocks of life, built cyclopean laboratories made of crystallized reality, forged roads through alternate dimensions to link their great works, and then began a grand experiment to create and uplift new sentient species. Their ultimate goal is unknowable, but the Precursors' actions were guided by the Mantle of Responsibility: a philosophy and set of ethical rules that compelled them to protect and preserve diversity of life ahead of their own self-interest.

Before they vanished, the Precursors reshaped the galaxy with tools of metal, flesh, and energy that were linked across space and time using neural physics, a transsentient science incomprehensible to lesser minds. The Precursors sailed between worlds in vessels guided by knowledge engines, but also walked on the star roads, bridges of unbreakable filaments that wove in and out of the deepest layers of slipspace. With boundless intellect and patience, millions of solar systems were reengineered by the Precursors and populated with what would eventually—after eons of growth, tending, and evolution—become new tools and companions.

PRECEPTORS: *The Forerunners refined and specialized body and mind to become living paragons of scientific, artistic, or martial skill.*



ANCIENTS: *Some memories and dreams of the Precursors still linger in distant spaces.*

FORERUNNERS

A hyper-advanced civilization whose legacy continues to influence all who followed.

The Forerunners were skillful builders, brilliant thinkers, and fearless warriors raised up by the Precursors to serve as their assistants and adjutants. Following the Precursors' disappearance, the Forerunners took up the Mantle of Responsibility and served faithfully as stewards of all life in the galaxy, though their ambition occasionally exceeded their wisdom. At their height of power, billions of Forerunner starships plied goods and ferried passengers between stars, and enforced their vision of peace on the galaxy. Their civilization, the Forerunner ecumene, was centered on the jeweled capital of Maethrillian and spanned over three million inhabited worlds.

The Forerunners were masters of slipspace and safely traversed its many sub-realms by exploiting strange geometries, crossing the galaxy with shape-shifting ships of exotic metals and solidified light. In time, the galaxy itself became their laboratory and factory. The ecumene forged entire worlds, wove artificial minds, captured the energies of alternate dimensions, tinkered with stars, and arranged great portals through slipspace that echoed the fabled star roads in effect, if not scale. Their wisdom and artifice was peerless, or so they thought.

After thriving for millions of years, the Forerunners fell prey to the Flood. Their efforts to contain the horrific parasite culminated with the activation of a weapon of last resort—the Halo Array. Halo eliminated all thinking life in the galaxy, depriving the Flood of the hosts they required; it was a ruinous victory, but victory nonetheless. All that remained were species that had been preserved, cataloged, and indexed at a hidden refuge outside the Milky Way as part of the Conservation Measure. The remaining Forerunners departed the galaxy after seeing to the reintroduction of sentient life. They did not return.

COVENANT

An alien alliance united in their misguided search for transcendence through the activation of Halo.

Some species recovered from the effects of Halo and flourished far sooner than the Forerunners had planned. In the Orion Arm of the Milky Way, the San'Shyuum and Sangheili were first to make tentative steps back into space; the former by studying and escaping with a Forerunner ship that had crashed on their world, and the latter by discovering the principles of translight physics that allowed access to slipspace. Though they initially met as enemies, the two species found a common purpose: veneration of the vanished Forerunners as gods. Eventually, a Writ of Union was signed, which allied the two species. The Covenant was born, and a shared belief in a Great Journey toward ascendance guided their steps.

The Covenant was obsessed with the discovery, cataloging, and protection of Forerunner artifacts in order to locate the Halo Array and unlock what they believed to be the path to godhood in its energies. Their mission to recover Forerunner technology brought the San'Shyuum and Sangheili into contact with other species, some of whom were brought into the Covenant with promises of salvation in return for service, while others were subjected to resource tithes or exterminated if they refused the Prophets' truth and impeded the search for Halo.

Though dogma and taboos stunted understanding of the science behind Forerunner artifacts, the Covenant made great strides in duplicating and operating their gods' relics. Swift slipspace drives, powerful plasma weapons, and impenetrable energy shields were fitted to spacecraft that melded artistry and practicality into monuments and tools for ambitious Covenant leaders. Vast fleets of exploration and exploitation were assembled to locate new resources, unbury god-machines left behind by the Forerunners, and seek the Holy Rings. Yet, for all its might, the Covenant was undone when the Prophets made a bid to control the very instruments of salvation and break the Writ of Union. Civil war still rages.

RECLAIMERS: *Though the Forerunner legacy is theirs to claim, humanity has yet to rediscover and explore their own ancient heritage.*



PROPHETS: *The San'Shyuum assumed a false identity as the Forerunners' enemies and administrators while the Sangheili, long enemies, were the Covenant's warriors.*

HUMANITY

Humanity has faced many trials since it began to voyage among the stars, and further challenges await.

Confined to a world without access to Forerunner artifacts to guide their steps, and plagued by never-ending civil strife, it is surprising that humanity discovered the means of space travel as quickly as it did. Commercial and social pressures led to the first tentative development and colonization of planets in the Sol system, and the creation of artificial intelligences dramatically accelerated the pace of scientific advancement in many fields, including terraforming and materials science. When Tobias Shaw and Wallace Fujikawa secretly developed the first experimental slipspace drive, no one realized that less than a century later a sizable fraction of humanity would have departed Earth for homesteads around other stars. This mass migration is now known as the *Domus Diaspora*.

Though the pace of technological advance slowed significantly after the initial wave of colonization, periodic civil strife and increasing interstellar trade meant that slipspace drives, fusion propulsion systems, and weapons remained priority research goals. Demand for new ships led to new techniques for faster, cheaper ship construction. Slipspace navigational techniques also improved, bringing new stars into reach.

For centuries, humanity thought it was alone in the Orion Arm, but time was not their ally. First contact and the decades-long Covenant War saw many colony worlds reduced to rubble and glass, billions dead. With the war over and humanity united, colonists and explorers once again dream, plan, and voyage to unexplored worlds.

SLIPSPACE

Slipstream space, often referred to simply as slipspace, is a hyper-compressed multidimensional domain that allows starships and information to travel immense distances in realspace over a truncated period of time. Slipspace drives allow ships to reach destinations hundreds—even thousands—of light years away in the span of days and weeks. It is because of slipspace that interstellar governance and interstellar wars exist.

ENTERING SLIPSPACE

Activating the slipspace drive creates an unstable portal between dimensions. The cruder the technology, the less elegant the entrance and exit, and the more dangerous the transition. Vessels that lack slipspace drives can follow a starship before the rupture closes and will be carried along with its “wake.” Ships in slipspace move through an inky black nothingness lit only by the scintillation of trace gases and debris at the limit of the drive’s protective realspace bubble.

THE SLIPSTREAM

Travel within slipspace is extraordinarily complicated, but is often abstracted as navigating a “tangled ball of yarn” made up of interwoven dimensions. Courses are plotted by navigating superfine patterns of quantum filaments and jumping between layers in slipspace until a locus is reached that intersects the destination in realspace. Preternatural intuition, or extraordinary computational power for predictive navigation and opportunistic flow choices, is a key element of determining travel time in these alternate spaces.

TRAVEL TIMES

Slipspace travel has little relationship to realspace distance in light years, and all trips are heavily influenced by “currents” and temporal variance effects. Some routes also have opportune confluences of pathways through slipspace, which can dramatically reduce travel time if risks are taken while navigating within slipspace. As a further complication, the slipspace relationship between locations is rarely the same in both directions, and can vary even along constantly monitored routes.

The Forerunner Ark and the colony of Harvest are both examples of destinations where travel time through slipspace does not correlate to distance. The Ark can be reached in a matter of months once the route is known and advantageous loci are discovered, despite being located far outside the galaxy, while travel to Harvest required nearly a year to reach through the earliest slipspace routes, even though it is on the figurative doorstep of Earth.

HAZARDS

Mechanical failure of a translight engine can cause what humans call a “slip termination,” in which a slipspace rupture is created inside the core and folds in on itself, resulting in a brief, uncontrolled expansion of slipspace into realspace. The vortex created swallows anything it touches. An intentionally sabotaged slipspace drive that triggered a slip termination was used by the UNSC to destroy the Covenant supercarrier *Long Night of Solace* during the siege of Reach.

WAVESPACE COMMUNICATIONS

Supraluminal communications make use of “wavespace”—dimensional realms similar to slipspace—to send information. It requires immense power to open a wavespace link, and data transfer speeds are limited, but real-time conversation is possible over short interstellar distances. These systems are also expensive, complicated, and prone to distortions that increase with distance; even the most powerful wavespace transceiver is useless if too far from relays and retransmission stations. With the use of Forerunner technology, wavespace links can be established within slipspace, allowing ships to receive mission updates and coordinates.

HUMAN SLIPSPACE DRIVES

Also known as Shaw-Fujikawa Translight Engines (SFTE) after their inventors, these devices refold local space-time, generating a quantum singularity that allows the ship to “punch” into slipspace at a precisely controlled energy level. SFTEs are housed in a bulky, heavily-shielded sarcophagus-like container, as they generate significant amounts of radiation while active. Though outclassed by Covenant drives, the SFTE technical architecture is relatively simple and straightforward, with substantial room for improvement; properties useful to both the UNSC and outside interests, such as Kig-Yar pirate clans.

The unrefined nature of SFTE technology has a number of drawbacks, such as requiring a massive amount of pulsed power to activate, high radiation output, and the need for periodic realignment of internal components to mitigate the risk of slip terminations. Most human ships lack a dedicated AI to monitor and tune the drives, and the internal mechanisms of an SFTE are delicate. Civilian ships travel along well-charted routes and pre-plot slipspace paths in order to minimize drive activations that could damage their expensive cores. Advanced military vessels have access to omni-capable smart AIs and more robust mechanisms, though there is no such thing as a completely reliable SFTE.



COVENANT SLIPSPACE DRIVES

Covenant FTL drives bore deep into slipspace, plunging them into strange and unchartable realms that would disintegrate the ship were it not for stolen Forerunner knowledge combined with carefully crafted power converters and translation interfaces. Due to their use of enigmatic Forerunner technology and techniques, Covenant slipspace drive cores can only be built with the assistance of Huragok savant-technicians, though San'Shyuum artisans designed the surrounding systems. Human researchers have much to learn from the Covenant techniques used to integrate Forerunner technology with different data systems and power supplies.

Covenant drives are fast and unerringly accurate along charted courses, but their lack of high-level AI for efficient pre-planning or course correction makes trips along unknown routes risky. Experienced shipmasters use short, fast "hops" to document new pathways and minimize potential for catastrophic navigational errors.



ophon-pattern drive core recovered from the CCS-class P

FORERUNNER SLIPSPACE DRIVES

The scale of Forerunner slipspace travel in the galaxy ranged from the movement of individual civilian transports to repositioning of massive construction and military installations the size of planets. At the core of all Forerunner translight engines is a small flake of slipspace-resonating crystal, cleaved from a now-lost core, which mediated temporal and spatial anomalies inherent to many slipspace interactions. This reduced travel times by orders of magnitude over the crude alternatives now used by humanity and the Covenant. The exotic composition and slipspace interactions of the crystal were incomprehensible even to Forerunners, and never replicated.

Forerunners also bound simpler, unmediated slipspace cores into portal constructs and translocation grids that generate stable, pre-computed slipspace pathways between synchronized endpoints. These fixed routes sacrifice flexibility of destination for security, safety, and speed.



THE GALAXY

The Milky Way galaxy is vast, with hundreds of billions of stars separated by incomprehensible distances and tangled slipspace routes. Limited resources and other distractions mean that only a few thousand star systems in the Orion Arm have been explored in detail by humanity and the Covenant. The state of the wider galaxy is a mystery except for small islands of knowledge recovered from Forerunner vaults or through special pioneer missions.



HALO ARRAY

Seven ringworld installations were placed through the galaxy to cleanse it of sentient life and halt the Flood's spread. Six remain active.



BETA HALO
INSTALLATION 01



EPSILON HALO
INSTALLATION 02



GAMMA HALO
INSTALLATION 03



ALPHA HALO
INSTALLATION 04



DELTA HALO
INSTALLATION 05



KAPPA HALO
INSTALLATION 06

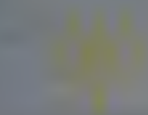


ZETA HALO
INSTALLATION 07



OVERWATCH NETWORK

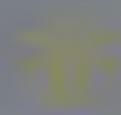
What remains of the Forerunner ecumene's legal and security system continues to monitor the status of key installations.



QUARANTINE SAFEGUARD
SHIELD 0006



JURIDICAL ARCHIVE
SHIELD 10021



INVICTA



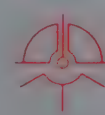
THEMA OPSON
GALATIAN CAPITAL



KERREC IRRUPTION
NATAL ANOMALY



ETRAN HARBORAGE
QUARANTINED



IX-KA ANOMALY
OPSON BURN

THREATS

Precursors and Forerunners could only contain some dangers. These prisons, marked by crystallized shards of time, tempt the unwary.

STARSHIPS

Starships are slipspace-enabled spacecraft, capable of faster-than-light travel between stars. Every starship relies on sophisticated technologies that allow the crew to travel across interstellar space to chart new worlds, conduct trade, or seek out enemies. Large military starships—known as capital ships—are often the cutting edge of a species' technological capabilities, incorporating materials and techniques that are neither cost- nor resource-efficient.

TRANSLIGHT ENGINES

Translight engines combine a slipspace core, which creates dimensional ruptures into slipstream space, and tunneling field generators, which protect the ship in an envelope of normal space-time while in transit. Entering slipspace requires a colossal amount of energy, so translight engines use extensive arrays of capacitors charged over a period of hours or days by the ship's fusion or antimatter reactors. Once in slipspace, navigation is in the hands of automated systems or artificial intelligences who make high-speed predictive route selections and flow choices to reach the target destination.



MANEUVER DRIVES

Though slipspace travel bridges the vast bulk of the distance between interstellar locations, starships must navigate the remaining expanse, operate in gravity wells, and evade hazards. Though the mechanisms differ by the type of maneuver drive, all convert energy into thrust, augmented with a reaction mass. Most capital ship drives operate in a low-thrust mode for routine travel to mitigate their massive energy demands and reduce stress on the hull.

ARTIFACT REPORT

\\ONI XENO-MATERIALS EXPLOITATION REPORT
15Y1198

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Reconstructed from artifact located at Site Yankee-002-G3, the discovered vessel does not conform to any known alien design. Damage patterns on the original hull were consistent with Tier 1 high-energy and tractor-pressur weapons, but there is no evidence of FSC infiltration or signature cryptostructures which are common elements of ZETA debitage. Our assessment is that the vessel is archaeohominina in origin, and further analysis should be immediately assigned to Project: ARC DREAM.

TACTICAL ASSESSMENT: Full simulation of tactical capabilities is ongoing, but initial simulation of primary weapon systems indicates that offensive mechanisms are a high probability match for weapons translated as "fibril cutters" in Forerunner records. Further investigation of this line of information has been assigned to the team on AZURE MOON. Other weapon systems appear to be a variation of particle beam accelerators, though the science team believes this to be superficially homologous.

STRUCTURE

Military starship hulls and armor are made of extraordinarily strong materials, both to protect against environmental hazards and mitigate or nullify incoming damage from enemy attacks. The hull is divided into sealed compartments containing key systems and habitable areas, which are further separated by armored bulkheads and airtight partition walls.

BRIDGE

The bridge is the control center of the starship, containing primary crew workstations and ship data systems. Large vessels may have secondary battle bridges to direct military operations and combat information centers to manage information sharing across ships in a battle group or squadron. Forerunner ships often lacked an obvious bridge, but still clustered key personnel for warfighting.

GRAVITY CONTROL

Though bulky and power-hungry, most starships incorporate a gravity control system and inertial compensators. The simplest application allows for comfortable gravity fields to be maintained within the ship's habitable areas and counter or diffuse the negative effects of rapid acceleration and evasive maneuvering. More comprehensive gravitic systems "nullify" the pull of gravity on the hull, allowing the ship to hover near a planet's surface without the use of thrusters.

SENSORS

The vastness of space necessitates the use of a range of active scanners and passive detectors to probe the void for obstructions, identify threats, and locate resources. Raw sensor data is processed, filtered, combined, prioritized, and then fed to artificial intelligences or displayed for crew members to analyze. Ships may also deploy probes and probes to survey and monitor distant locations or scout potentially dangerous areas without risking the ship.

ARMAMENTS

Humanity and the Covenant spread to the stars carrying their grudges and animosities with them. Wars of conquest, battles for honor, and strife over political disagreements are conducted with superheated plasma and relativistic projectiles, shaping and reshaping the astro-political landscape with a finality that diplomacy lacks.

1 - NUCLEAR WARHEADS

The use of proximity-fused nuclear warheads in space engagements was widespread early in the Covenant War, but thermal shock and direct radiation proved ineffective against energy-shielded ships. Later developments used the warhead to power x-ray lasers and focused plasma spears. Conventional nuclear weapons are still deployed in terrestrial combat as a tool of last resort.

2 - SMART BOMBS

Smart bombs are ground-attack munitions that can home in on energy reflected from target designators, detect and prioritize targets based on lidar and hyperspectral signature matching, or strike designated coordinates, as appropriate. There are many variations of smart bombs, and the UNSC employs a modular approach where guidance system, warhead, and frame can be mixed and matched.

UNSC FIGHTER-BOMBER

C712 LONGSWORD

MANUFACTURER: Misriah Armory

HULL CODE: SS (Anti-Ship Spaceplane)

ROLES: Interception; attack

CREW: Pilot; sensor technician

LENGTH: 33.5 meters

MASS: 180 metric tons

ARMAMENT: 8x M9109 coilguns; 4x ASGM-10 missiles

The Longsword is a multi-role military spaceplane used by the UNSC. The internal ordnance bay typically fits a rotary launcher for nuclear-tipped anti-ship missiles, but can also hold conventional smart bombs, satellites, or special mission payloads.

INTERCEPTOR

The C712 Longsword is smaller and significantly faster than the more common C709 model. It is known as the SS-110 in Air Force service.

3 - COILGUNS

UNSC coilguns use electromagnetic Asynchronous Linear Induction Motor (ALIM) technology to fire hyperdense projectiles at velocities unattainable by any chemical energy-based weapon. The M9109 on the Longsword fires subcaliber projectiles at such speeds that they immediately begin to burn up from air friction when fired within an atmosphere.

4 - ANTI-SHIP MISSILES

Fighters carry compact versions of the capital-scale missiles used by warships, with much shorter ranges but similar destructive power. These are usually carried in internal bays to protect them before launch. Each missile is loaded with a simple AI that communicates with nearby munitions to maximize lethality and defeat point defense systems.

DEFENSES

Developing the means for starships to defend themselves against increasingly powerful weaponry is a never-ending arms race between competing scientists and engineers. Smart component layout, improved armor formulation, upgraded shield power, and increased maneuverability ensure vessels can safely travel across interstellar space and carry out their missions in a hostile galaxy.

HYPERISCANNERS

Covenant sensors provide extremely detailed information on any object within range, including internal scans and structural composition. Covenant crews have difficulty interpreting the sheer volume of information available, and their workstations typically filter anything not of immediate tactical significance.

ENERGY SHIELDING

Energy shields are interlocking fields of invisible force that absorb and redirect incoming attacks. Though not impregnable, shields can be reinforced, and regenerate as long as their emitters remain intact and powered. UNSC tactics soon developed to overload shields with overwhelming firepower and then deliver a killing blow before they could recycle.

COVENANT STORM CUTTER DAS-CLASS (MUTAN ET PATTERN)

MANUFACTURER: Primary Assembly Forges

ROLES: Pursuit; scout; harassment

CREW: 1 Superior; 15 Menials

TROOPS: 1 Obedientary; 10 Warriors

LENGTH: 225 meters

MASS: 41,000 metric tons

ARMAMENT: 4x Emri Ka-pattern light plasma lances; 4x Enteros-pattern plasma beam emitters; 4x Phot Et-pattern pulse lasers

Relentless and elusive, the DAS-class is a light attack ship used by the Covenant and its successor factions. During the Covenant War these vessels operated as scouts and strikecraft tenders, which prowled in hunter-killer teams at the far edges of major fleet engagements. However, many of the remaining ships have now fallen into the rapacious claws of Kig-Yar raiders.

DEFENSE ARRAY

The Covenant see little distinction between avoiding and mitigating damage, and use a variety of active jammers, deception field generators, and auto-repair systems working in harmony to ensure ships remain effective in combat, even after their shields fail and nanocomposite hulls are pierced. Covenant damage control techniques are also ruthless and effective, with little attention paid to crew survival or safety.

TITANIUM-A BATTLEPLATE

Human warships are armored with thick layers of molecularly-reinforced titanium, elastic polymers, and intermetallic laminate that mitigate damage from both directed energy and kinetic attacks. The space between the armor plates is filled with shock-hardening fluids and encapsulated healing agents to reduce spall from impacts and automatically seal small hull breaches.

SENSOR SUITE

Human ships use a combination of laser and radar scanners for actively detecting and tracking targets, but also passively monitor surrounding space for anomalous energy sources. The crew and AI ship director have access to hundreds—even thousands—of easily understandable real-time reports via displays that intelligently combine and fuse this data.

POINT DEFENSE GUNS

UNSC vessels use compact, rapid fire coilgun turrets for defense against Covenant strikecraft and to disrupt incoming plasma torpedoes. These guns are entirely automated, as calculating firing solutions in the heat of battle is far beyond the means of any human.

UNSC HEAVY CORVETTE GLADIUS-CLASS

MANUFACTURER: TanSec AB

HULL CODE: FS (Corvette)

ROLES: Interdiction; patrol; security

CREW: 15 Navy

TROOPS: None

LENGTH: 243 meters

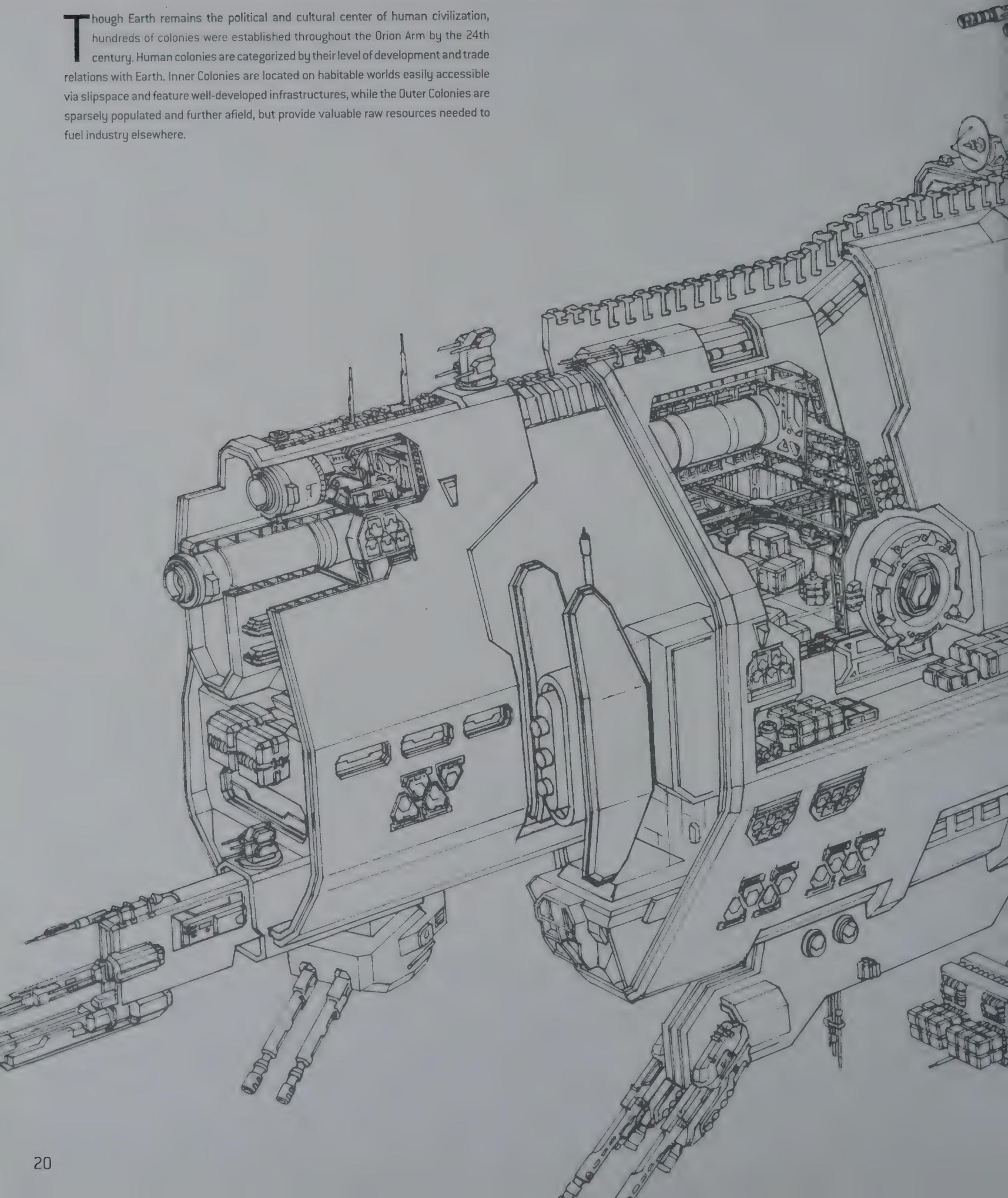
MASS: 36,000 metric tons

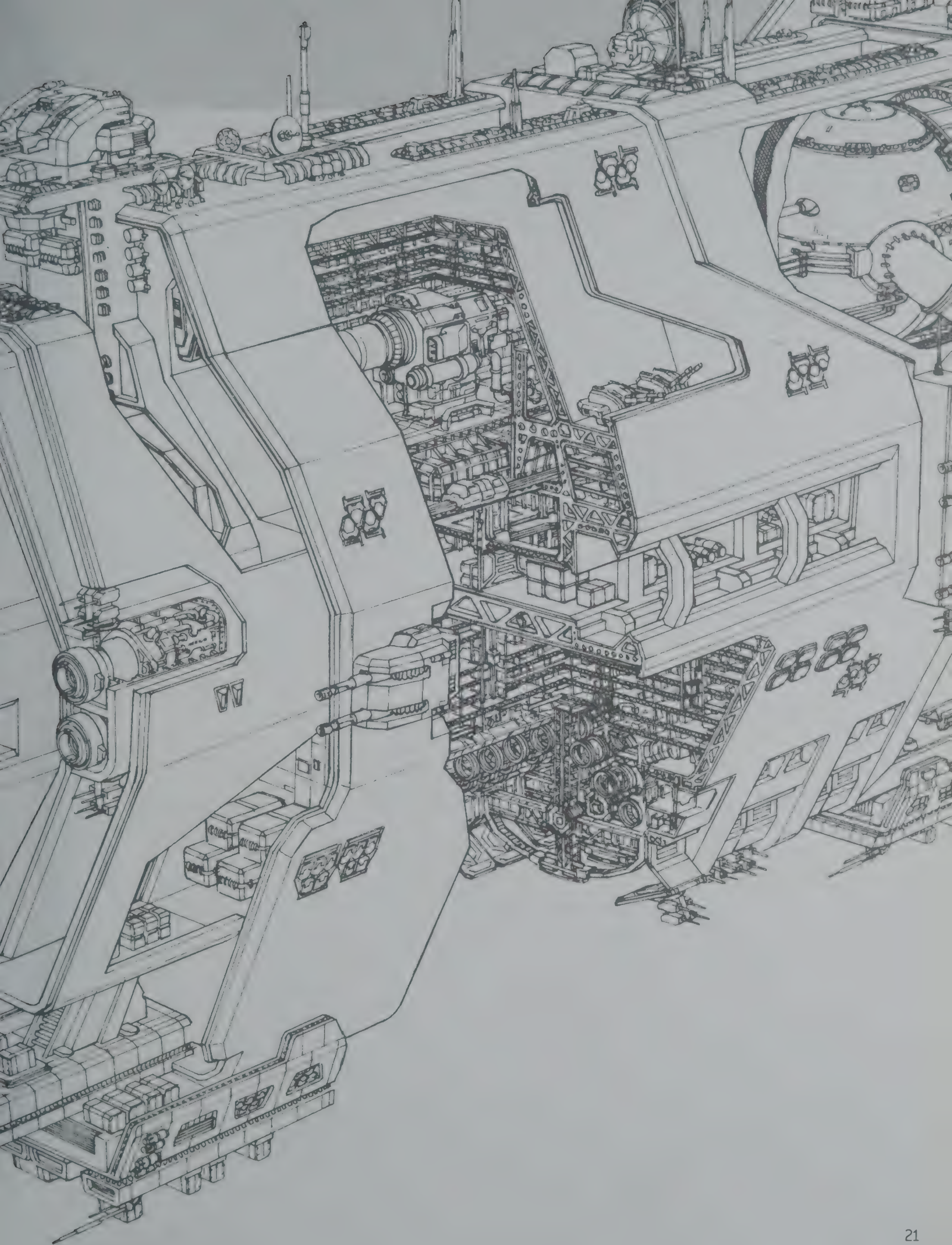
ARMAMENT: 1x 20DA1C2 Magnetic Accelerator Cannon; 2x M58 Archer missile pods; 6x M870 Rampart point defense guns

The *Gladius*-class is a small, slipspace-capable warship used by UNSC Navy battle groups assigned to the Inner Colonies. Substantially outgunned by most Covenant warships, UNSC corvettes rarely participate in major fleet engagements and rely on their small size and low sensor profile to avoid unwinnable fights.

THE HUMAN SPHERE

Though Earth remains the political and cultural center of human civilization, hundreds of colonies were established throughout the Orion Arm by the 24th century. Human colonies are categorized by their level of development and trade relations with Earth. Inner Colonies are located on habitable worlds easily accessible via slipspace and feature well-developed infrastructures, while the Outer Colonies are sparsely populated and further afield, but provide valuable raw resources needed to fuel industry elsewhere.





EARTH'S COLONIES

There were once nearly a thousand permanent human outposts in the Orion Arm, ranging from resource factories buried in rich asteroids to terraformed worlds with populations in the billions. The Covenant burned most to glass and rubble.

EARTH

Earth is the cradle of humanity, scarred by war but brimming with possibilities.

SYSTEM: Sol

SATELLITES: Luna

POPULATION: 7.9 billion

With its large and diverse population, Earth serves as a center of governance, a leading center of artistic innovation, and the home of cutting-edge research and development. Terraforming technology has also helped to remedy centuries of mistreatment, though some environmental damage and scars of war will never be completely healed. Following the Covenant War many of Earth's cities lay in ruins, but intensive reconstruction and redevelopment has resulted in normalcy and prosperity for most of the population.

ERIDANUS II

Eridanus II is the birthplace of legendary heroes and infamous rebels, and home to the best and worst that humanity has to offer.

SYSTEM: Eridanus

SATELLITES: Ehilend

POPULATION: 510,000

Eridanus II was famous for its beautiful landscapes, higher learning centers, and an independence movement that nearly tore human interstellar society apart. Earth never truly controlled Eridanus II; rebels based on the planet continued to be a thorn in the UNSC's side even as the Covenant burned the Outer Colonies. The planet's urban areas were destroyed at the end of the Covenant War, but enough population and infrastructure survived to ensure Eridanus II was selected for priority redevelopment.

HARVEST

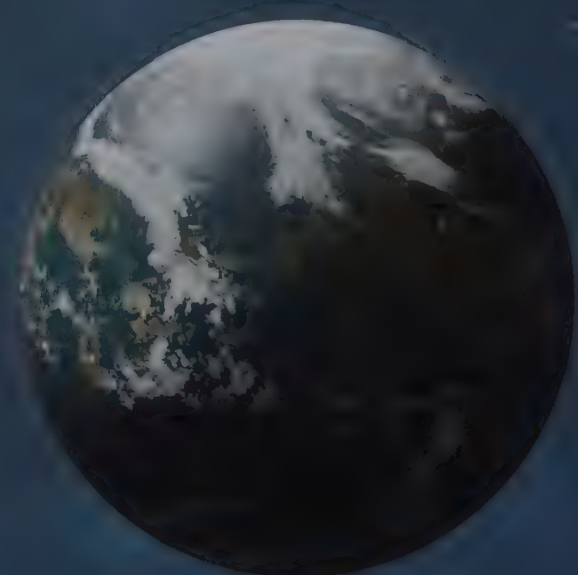
This idyllic world was the first to burn in the Covenant's assault on humanity.

SYSTEM: Epsilon Indi

SATELLITES: None

POPULATION: 0

A sparsely populated farming world located at the end of a complex and circuitous slipspace route, Harvest was classified as one of the most remote Outer Colonies prior to its destruction. In its prime, it provided enormous agricultural surpluses to Earth's colonies, but is now a charred graveworld in the throes of a nuclear winter. Its cratered surface and dead oceans are a testament to what was lost during the Covenant's brutal campaign, though several Forerunner complexes survive deep in the mantle, awaiting new purpose.



MERIDIAN

Destroyed by Covenant plasma bombardment, Meridian's melted cities are mined for valuable resources.

SYSTEM: Hestia

SATELLITE OF: Hestia V

POPULATION: 5,321

Before the Covenant War, Meridian was one of the most vibrant and economically diverse of Earth's Outer Colonies. Now its cities are lakes of glass and rubble, its verdant forests reduced to charred wastelands. Yet despite the devastation, life and the potential for recovery remains. Salvage teams chip away at the surface to recover resources and begin the process of re-terraforming as part of an initiative led by the Liang-Dortmund megacorporation.



REACH

The fortress world of Reach was the last human colony to fall to the Covenant, but one of the first to begin rebuilding.

SYSTEM: Epsilon Eridani

SATELLITES: Turul, Csodaszarvas

POPULATION: 121,000

Reach was the largest and most resource-rich of the Inner Colonies, and served as the primary UNSC military staging site. It was the last major colony to fall to the Covenant, suffering extensive damage as a result of widespread plasma bombardment. Because of its symbolic and strategic value Reach was quickly selected for rehabilitation and full-scale recolonization by the UEG. This ambitious and lengthy remediation project is aided by Reach's surviving settlements and the remaining orbital elevators.



VENEZIA

A human colony now embraced by a number of different species, Venezia thrives as a community of outlaws and merchants.

SYSTEM: Orso (Qab in Sangheili)

SATELLITES: Tiro

POPULATION: 10.9 million

A planet with few ties to the UEG, Venezia has evolved from an anarchic Outer Colony to a major center of interstellar trade and commerce. With a multi-species population, it has become a hub for trade with former Covenant worlds, making it increasingly influential in astro-politics. Merchants and miscreants from around the galaxy now call the planet home, having forged a relatively peaceful government based in the capital city, New Tyne, operating under a simple yet ruthless set of business rules.



PILLAR OF AUTUMN

Dozens of *Halcyon*-class vessels served in the UNSC Navy, but only one made its mark on history. Selected for a mission that could end the Covenant War, *Pillar of Autumn* was plucked from obscurity to become one of the most important ships in human history. Chosen for its durability and expendability, the

Autumn was given special upgrades and placed under the command of Captain Jacob Keyes shortly before the Covenant assault on Reach. When Reach fell, the *Pillar of Autumn* escaped destruction—only to find itself in an unexplored star system overlooking a massive alien ringworld: Halo.

OPERATION: RED FLAG

Operation: RED FLAG was planned to be a last-ditch mission deep into Covenant space to capture a High Prophet and force a ceasefire. For this reason, the *Pillar of Autumn* was assigned a battalion of elite Orbital Drop Shock Troopers (ODSTs) under Major Antonio Silva, and a team of Spartan-II super-soldiers led by Master Chief John-117. The UNSC's most advanced artificial intelligence, Cortana, was to direct the operation. The Covenant attack on Reach unraveled this plan, and the *Pillar of Autumn* was forced to flee.

MAGNETIC ACCELERATOR CANNON (MAC)

The *Pillar of Autumn*'s main gun extends two-thirds the length of the ship.

FOREMAST

Slipspace navigation sensors and hardened battlenet transponders.

COMMAND BRIDGE

Omega-pattern bridge upgraded with a Tier III datacore to hold Cortana.

NAVAL AUTOCANNONS

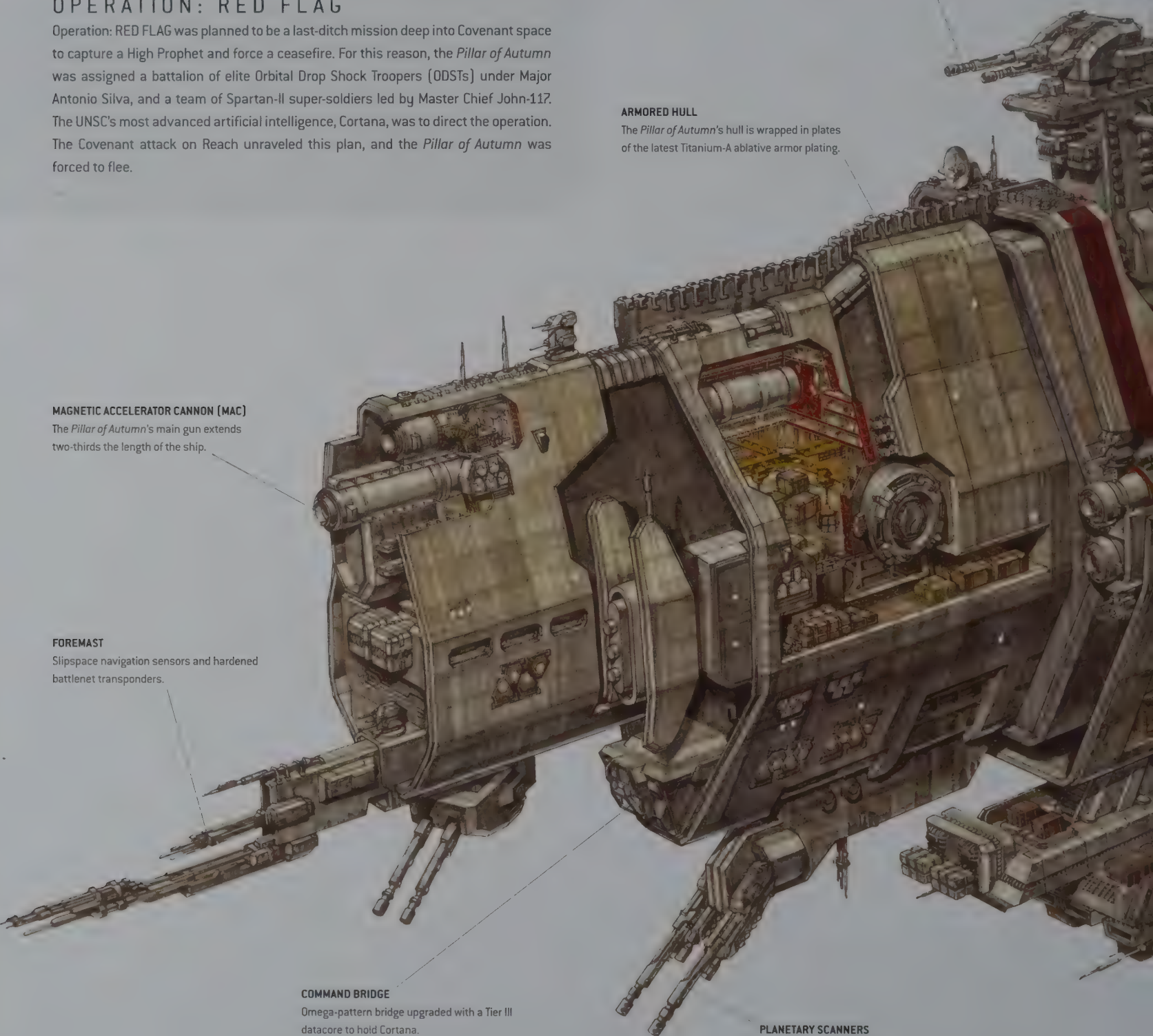
Each Spitfire turret mounts two rapid-fire naval coilguns.

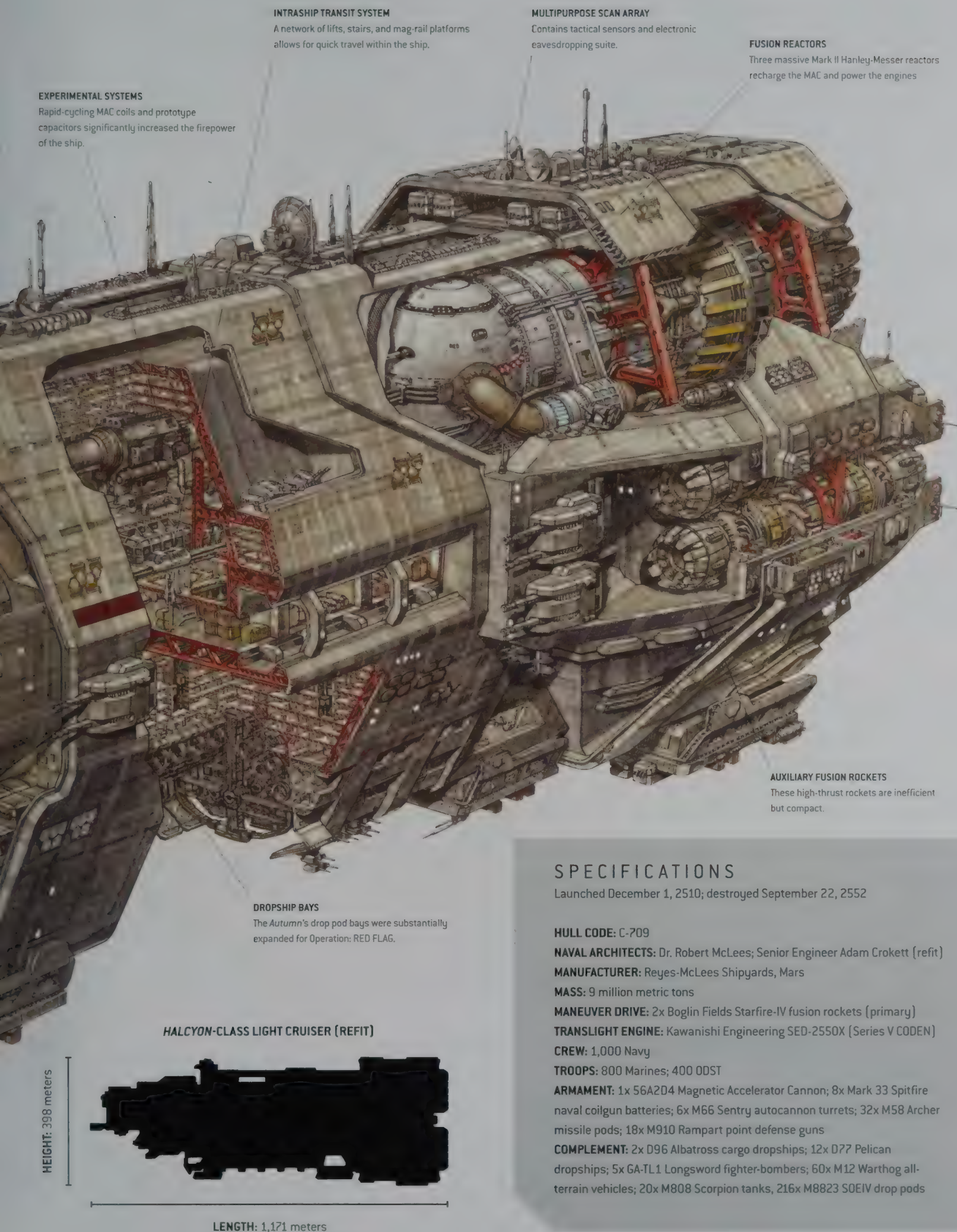
ARMORED HULL

The *Pillar of Autumn*'s hull is wrapped in plates of the latest Titanium-A ablative armor plating.

PLANETARY SCANNERS

Planetary survey sensors and probe/satellite launchers.





INTRASHIP TRANSIT SYSTEM

A network of lifts, stairs, and mag-rail platforms allows for quick travel within the ship.

MULTIPURPOSE SCAN ARRAY

Contains tactical sensors and electronic eavesdropping suite.

FUSION REACTORS

Three massive Mark II Hanley-Messer reactors recharge the MAC and power the engines

EXPERIMENTAL SYSTEMS

Rapid-cycling MAC coils and prototype capacitors significantly increased the firepower of the ship.

AUXILIARY FUSION ROCKETS

These high-thrust rockets are inefficient but compact.

DROPSHIP BAYS

The *Autumn*'s drop pod bays were substantially expanded for Operation: RED FLAG.

HALCYON-CLASS LIGHT CRUISER (REFIT)

HEIGHT: 398 meters

LENGTH: 1,171 meters

SPECIFICATIONS

Launched December 1, 2510; destroyed September 22, 2552

HULL CODE: C-709

NAVAL ARCHITECTS: Dr. Robert McLees; Senior Engineer Adam Crockett (refit)

MANUFACTURER: Reyes-McLees Shipyards, Mars

MASS: 9 million metric tons

MANEUVER DRIVE: 2x Boglin Fields Starfire-IV fusion rockets (primary)

TRANSLIGHT ENGINE: Kawanishi Engineering SED-2550X [Series V CODEN]

CREW: 1,000 Navy

TROOPS: 800 Marines; 400 ODST

ARMAMENT: 1x 56A2D4 Magnetic Accelerator Cannon; 8x Mark 33 Spitfire naval coilgun batteries; 6x M66 Sentry autocannon turrets; 32x M58 Archer missile pods; 18x M910 Rampart point defense guns

COMPLEMENT: 2x D96 Albatross cargo dropships; 12x D77 Pelican dropships; 5x GA-TL1 Longsword fighter-bombers; 60x M12 Warthog all-terrain vehicles; 20x M808 Scorpion tanks, 216x M8823 SOEIV drop pods

CRUISERS

UNSC cruisers are heavily armed and armored capital ships which engage and destroy enemy warships that would otherwise threaten the fleet's carriers. Much of their resilience comes from the installation of thick Titanium-A armor plates, which boil off under Covenant plasma bombardment, sparing the internal structure, weapons, and crew from critical damage until it is eroded away.

UNSC HEAVY CRUISER AUTUMN-CLASS

MANUFACTURER: SinoViet Heavy Machinery

HULL CODE: CA (Heavy Cruiser)

ROLES: Attack; command; escort

CREW: 800 Navy

TROOPS: 45 Marines; 220 ODST

LENGTH: 1,425 meters

MASS: 10.1 million metric tons

ARMAMENT: 1x 45J3D3 Magnetic Accelerator Cannon; 4x Mark 40 Spitfire naval coilgun batteries; 6x M66 Sentry autocannon turrets; 32x M58 Archer missile pods; 6x M910 Rampart point defense guns

The *Autumn*-class strikes a balance between mobility, armor, firepower, crew requirements, and ease of manufacturing. The first ships of this class were built on recycled *Halcyon*-class light cruiser hulls, with improvements and modifications tested on the *Pillar of Autumn* for Operation: RED FLAG.

▲ DOCKING RING

UNSC-standard airlock and cargo reception port for crew and consumables transfer.

SHIELD-REINFORCED ARMOR

The *Autumn*-class vessels feature a novel variation of electromagnetic armor that incorporates a distributed array of small shield generators, which are cheaper and easier to manufacture. When the outer Titanium-A hull plates are hit, sensors within the armor trigger the nearest generator, creating an intense, transient energy shield effect localized on the point of impact.

▲ LONG-RANGE SENSORS

Though most tactical systems are similar to other late-Covenant War ships, the *Autumn*-class adds replicated Covenant hyperscanner detectors combined with state-of-the-art naval battlenet relays to its sensory arsenal.

SCANNING CAPACITY

Planetary survey sensors and probe launchers deploy microsatellite constellations and drones in support of orbital and ground operations.

ARMOR COWLINGS

The distinctive armored cowls protecting the fusion engines on UNSC warships are a result of costly lessons learned during the anti-Insurrection campaigns

ARCHER PODS

Long-range anti-ship missile launchers

NAVAL AUTOCANNONS

Mark 40 Spitfire naval cannons have higher muzzle velocity, improved tracking speed, and better accuracy than their famous and widely used Mark 33 predecessor. The gun mount is also armored with a new Titanium-A formulation that shaves several tons off each turret without compromising protection

MODULAR HANGAR BAYS

The *Autumn*-class can swap out containerized mission modules and partition its cargo holds to focus on different objectives. The orbital assault and strike configuration is described here, which adds docking cradles for Darter cargo dropships and blast-shielded ammo storage for ODS and gunship munitions.

PELICAN DROPSHIP

Up to twelve D77 or D79 Pelican dropships are carried aboard each cruiser during missions.



▲ DROP POD BAYS

Nicknamed "Hell's Waiting Room," the *Autumn*-class fits six drop pod bays and cramped accommodations for an ODS company and their gear. Up to 216 SOEIV and cargo drop pods can be deployed simultaneously from the bay racks after the armored doors are opened.

FIGHTERS

UNSC fighters are mobile weapon platforms that use high acceleration and maneuverability to engage enemy warships and strikecraft at close range with missiles and rapid-fire projectile weapons. Fighters also act as mobile point defense screens, are deployed as long-range scouts, and strike critical targets on planetary surfaces.

UNSC INTERCEPTOR

F-41E BROADSWORD

MANUFACTURER: Misriah Armory

DESIGNATION CODE: F [Fighter]

ROLES: Strike; intercept

CREW: 1 pilot

LENGTH: 20.2 meters

MASS: 35 metric tons

ARMAMENT: 2x M1075 autocannons; 2x M6088 Medusa missile pods;
1x Class-III hardpoint

The Broadsword is a multi-role strike fighter, able to operate in and outside of atmosphere, used by both the UNSC Air Force and Navy, as well as planetary defense forces. Manufactured in the tens of thousands during the Covenant War, the Broadsword's design plans were widely distributed and easily adapted to fabrication facilities found on many Outer Colony worlds. The large number of trained pilots and availability of parts after the war has made "demilitarized" derivations of the Broadsword extremely popular with security contractors and mercenary groups.



▲ POST-WAR UPGRADES

The F-41E entered service in 2554, and incorporates design improvements and deferred upgrades which were impossible to implement under wartime conditions. In addition to energy shielding and reformulated Titanium-A armor panels, the sensor system has been updated with the capability to track, identify, and prioritize hundreds of targets.

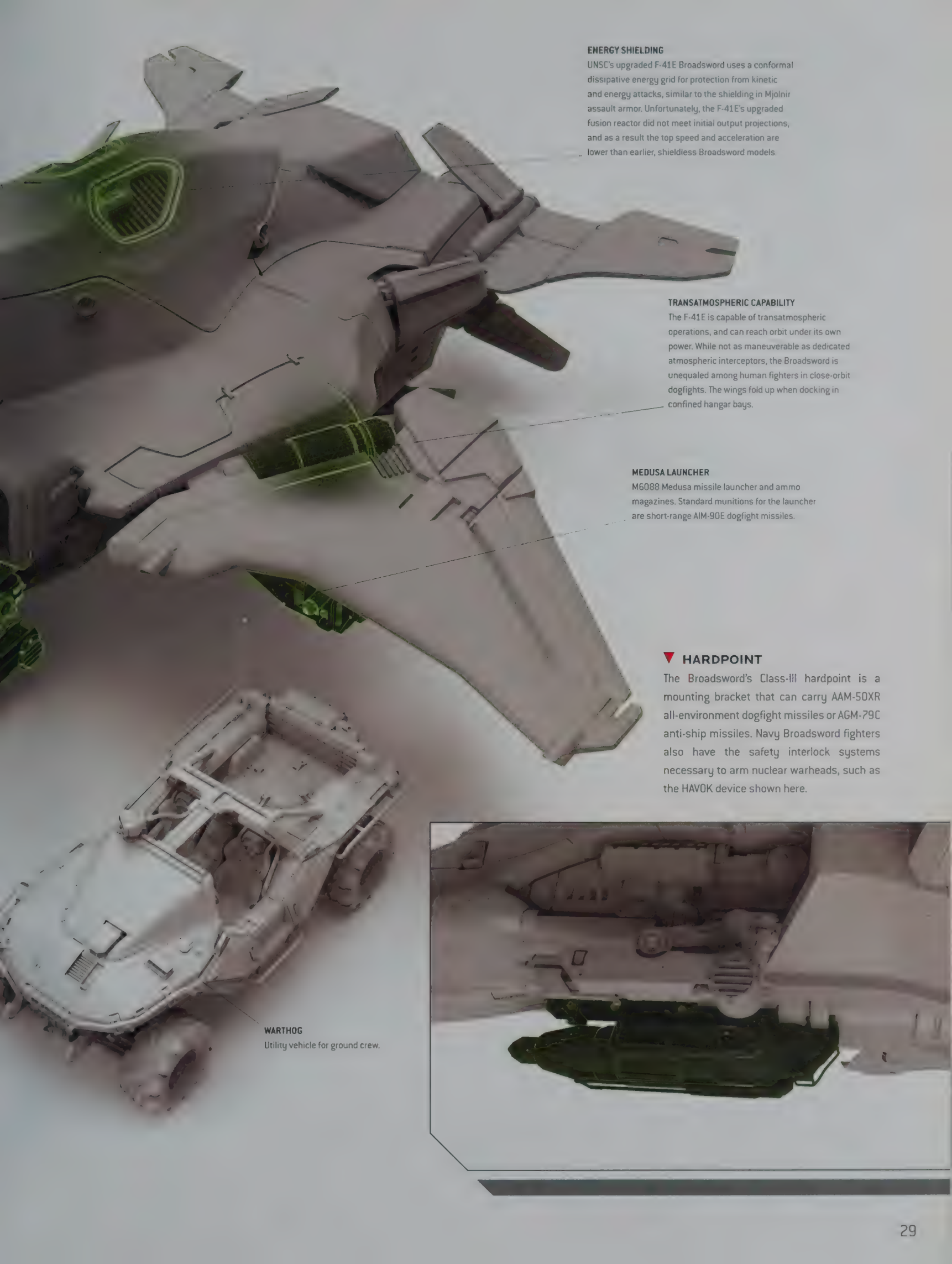


AUTOCANNONS

M1075 autocannons on retractable, semi-articulated armatures.

COCKPIT

Modern Broadswords feature a full cyberlink interface for augmented pilots, inertial compensators to mitigate the physical effects of high-G maneuvers, and targeting software compatible with VISR interfaces.



ENERGY SHIELDING

UNSC's upgraded F-41E Broadsword uses a conformal dissipative energy grid for protection from kinetic and energy attacks, similar to the shielding in Mjolnir assault armor. Unfortunately, the F-41E's upgraded fusion reactor did not meet initial output projections, and as a result the top speed and acceleration are lower than earlier, shieldless Broadsword models.

TRANSATMOSPHERIC CAPABILITY

The F-41E is capable of transatmospheric operations, and can reach orbit under its own power. While not as maneuverable as dedicated atmospheric interceptors, the Broadsword is unequalled among human fighters in close-orbit dogfights. The wings fold up when docking in confined hangar bays.

MEDUSA LAUNCHER

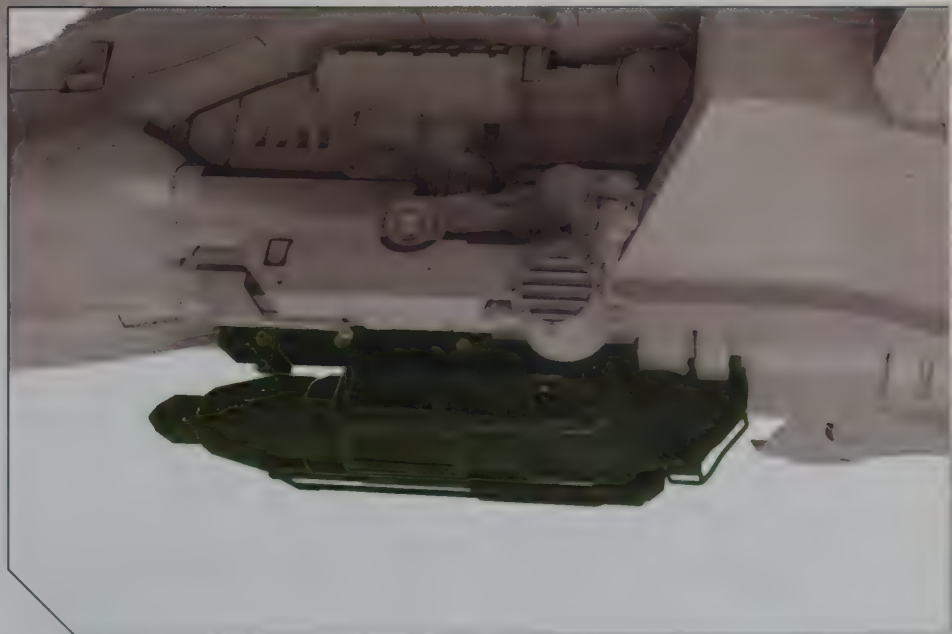
M6088 Medusa missile launcher and ammo magazines. Standard munitions for the launcher are short-range AIM-90E dogfight missiles.

▼ HARDPOINT

The Broadsword's Class-III hardpoint is a mounting bracket that can carry AAM-50XR all-environment dogfight missiles or AGM-79C anti-ship missiles. Navy Broadsword fighters also have the safety interlock systems necessary to arm nuclear warheads, such as the HAVOK device shown here.

WARTHOG

Utility vehicle for ground crew.



CAIRO STATION

Cairo was one of three hundred weapon platforms built to protect Earth from invasion. Arranged in a three-station battle cluster, Cairo and its sister platforms, Athens and Malta, were parked in geosynchronous orbit above the Mediterranean to shield UNSC forces with its powerful Magnetic Accelerator Cannon. While these stations formed an impregnable defense cordon in simulations, they ultimately failed to repel the Covenant.

Cairo Station served as a command post for UNSC Navy forces throughout the battle for Earth. Fleet Admiral Hood remained on the station even after Earth's defenses were decimated by the arrival of Covenant fleets under the Prophet of Truth's command. Alien warships eventually bypassed the orbital weapon platforms entirely, opening slipspace portals directly in Earth's atmosphere to bombard urban centers and military bases at close range.

BATTLE CLUSTER SPECIALIZATION

Each station in a battle cluster had a different hangar configuration. Cairo was configured to carry light fighters and utility craft. Malta carried Longsword interceptors. Athens had Dartar cargo shuttles and maintenance drones.

UMBILICALS

If the station's reactor is damaged a docked UNSC warship can be tapped to power the MAC.

SPACE BRIDGE

These movable access platforms connect directly to smaller UNSC warships.

LIFEPOD

SKT-9 Bumblebee emergency shuttles.

SECURITY STATION

The marines guarding Cairo would have been overwhelmed were it not for the Master Chief's assistance.

HANGARS

Cairo's hangars accommodate a variety of small craft.

ORBITAL DEFENSE GRID

Earth's final defensive cordon combined ground-based aerospace fighters, low-orbit satellites, geosynchronous weapon platforms, and warship squadrons into a multi-layered integrated system. Ambitious as it was, the UNSC's strategy was flawed in that it assumed Covenant attack patterns and slipspace navigational techniques would not change or evolve. They did, and tens of thousands of brave men and women paid the ultimate price.

MAC ROUND

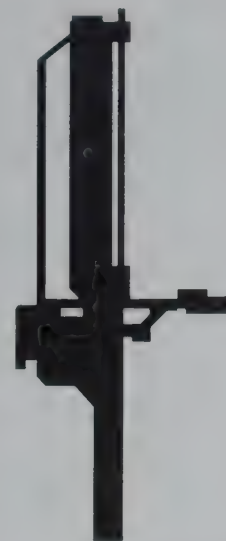
Each multi-ton MAC round leaves the barrel traveling several kilometers per second.

ACCELERATOR COILS

Hundreds of asynchronous linear induction motors line the barrel.

MONCTON-CLASS ORBITAL WEAPON PLATFORM

HEIGHT: 1,366 meters



LENGTH: 536 meters

DURASTEEL ARMOR

Orbital weapon platforms use cheap durasteel armor blends for protection.



COMMAND CENTER

Cairo Station served as the command post for UNSC Fleet Admiral Hood throughout the battle for Earth.

CREW QUARTERS

Cramped, but livable.

PULSED POWER

Stacked liquid-metal capacitance cells allow for rapid cycling of the MAC gun while their charge lasts.

SPECIFICATIONS

Construction started August 23, 2550; operational September 14, 2552

HULL CODE: OWP-142

NAVAL ARCHITECTS: Lead Engineer Alexander Kerr-Fox; Dr. Stephen Loftus

MANUFACTURER: Vosper Engineering, Luna

MASS: 2.9 million metric tons

MANEUVER DRIVE: Stationkeeping thrusters

TRANSLIGHT ENGINE: None

CREW: 152 Navy

TROOPS: 136 Marines

ARMAMENT: 1x 14D4A1 Magnetic Accelerator Cannon; 7x M606 Goalkeeper point defense guns

COMPLEMENT: 10x D77-TC Pelican dropships or F-41D Broadsword fighters

DESTROYERS

UNSC destroyers combine heavy armament with high speed and thick armor. These small warships use wolfpack tactics to engage Covenant vessels with coordinated MAC gun fire and hit-and-run attacks, overwhelming their target's defenses, which were often superior.

UNSC DESTROYER HALBERD-CLASS

MANUFACTURER: SinoViet Heavy Machinery

HULL CODE: DD (Destroyer)

ROLES: Attack; escort

CREW: 250 Navy

TROOPS: 50 Marines

LENGTH: 485 meters

MASS: 1.8 million metric tons

ARMAMENT: 1x 14B11R2 MAC battery; 26x M58 Archer missile pods; 4x M870 Rampart point defense guns

Fast and requiring only a small crew, what the *Halberd*-class destroyer lacks in general-purpose utility it makes up for in firepower. It can be easily configured for different missions, but resource shortfalls during the Covenant War meant most *Halberd* destroyers were configured purely for escort duty, with entire subsystems and hull sections left out to reduce construction time and crew requirements.

NAVY CREW QUARTERS

Living accommodations on Covenant War-era UNSC military vessels are cramped and strictly utilitarian; most ships lack recreational options and have only rudimentary kitchen facilities. Each crew member is allocated an individual sleeping pod, but crew shifts alternate, sharing the same pods, when the ship carries additional personnel.

MAGNETIC ACCELERATOR CANNONS

The *Halberd* is fitted with two MAC launch rails. The primary MAC is capable of firing all standard munition packages, ranging from hyper-dense kinetic kill slugs to semi-autonomous drone missiles, while only kinetic rounds are carried for the smaller cannon.



▲ HANGAR

The hangar on *Halberd*-class vessels was state-of-the-art at the time of its introduction, featuring a specialized set of gravity generators that can decelerate incoming small craft or accelerate them at launch. Traditional electromagnetic launch hooks and arrestor cables are still fitted, for emergencies.



BRIDGE

UNSC Navy design guidelines emphasize that the command crew require visibility of the surrounding area; a tradition dating back to the era of terrestrial naval warfare.



CAPACITOR CELLS

Damaged and degraded MAC capacitor cells can be quickly swapped out.

PELICAN DROPSHIP

Two dropships are carried aboard each *Halberd*.



BATTLEPLATE

A key difference between frigates and destroyers is the latter's use of thicker and higher-quality Titanium-A armor plating. Replacement armor plates can be quickly cut to shape and patched onto the ship at any naval depot, though repairs to the underlying structure often have to wait.

▲ FUSION DRIVES

The *Halberd* and other human warships couple massive reactors with fusion rockets for propulsion, generating both power and direct thrust with Deuterium and Helium-3 fuel and hydrogen or water reaction mass. The superheated exhaust is redirected with thrust-vectoring plates and magnetic fields to increase maneuverability.

SPACE STATIONS

Even the smallest human colony and resource world is surrounded by a constellation of orbital installations, ranging from small communication relays and laboratory workshacks, to massive lattice-like shipyards and habitat cylinders. Stations are linked together with fleets of small cargo haulers and orbital transfer vehicles, while space and ground are linked by orbital elevators that cheaply and efficiently move mass up and down the gravity well.

ONI RESEARCH FACILITY IVANOFF STATION

MANUFACTURER: ONI Assembly Team 56

HULL CODE: ONIRF IS-004920//001-54

ROLES: Research; observation

CREW: 250 Unified Earth Government staff

TROOPS: 90 ONI security

ARMAMENT: 16x Mark 2551 Onager MAC turrets

Located near Gamma Halo, Ivanoff Station began as a simple makeshift orbital habitat, but quickly grew into a permanent UNSC facility dedicated to scouring the ring installation for secrets of the Forerunners. Among the most important discoveries was a Forerunner monolith buried beneath the surface of the ringworld. Though the artifact proved to be an enigma for the UNSC researchers, its presence drew the attention of the Didact after he was awakened on Requiem.



▲ MAC ARRAY

Ivanoff Station boasts a network of sixteen Mark 2551 Onager MACs, which protect the facility from the occasional rogue asteroid and errant Sentinel, and serve as a deterrent for any naval assault. A single shot is sufficient to destroy a Covenant dropship or damage small warships. Ivanoff Station's powerful fusion reactors allow for sustained rapid fire during emergencies.

REMNANTS

The rocky debris field surrounding Ivanoff are fragments of a broken world.

HABITAT MODULES

The crew of Ivanoff Station was a mix of ONI personnel and civilian contractors assigned to the facility for years-long deployments. None were spared when the Didact attacked.

▼ THE HARBOR

The main hangar of Ivanoff Station can handle small cargo transports, fighters, and dropships. The hangar is kept pressurized at all times, with an energy barricade system to retain atmosphere as ships pass in and out.



WAVECOM RELAY

Ivanoff Station is outfitted with the most advanced supraluminal communication system available to ONI

BLACK SITE

Unknown even to most of the station personnel, ONI ran an illegal "black site" within Ivanoff that used imprisoned scientists and technicians from throughout the UEG to work on dangerous and ethically-dubious research projects. The full scale and scope of this work was lost during the Didact's attack, as information sanitation protocols wiped the relevant records.

SCIENCE MODULES

All ONI science stations house a range of specialized laboratories and workshops. Ivanoff possesses additional state-of-the-art facilities for the storage, deconstruction, and analysis of Forerunner machinery.

UTILITY CRAFT

A small fleet of Pelicans and Darters moved personnel and cargo between the station and Gamma Halo, protected by a wing of Broadsword fighters

THERMAL CONTROL

Waste heat from the station is either pumped into the host asteroid or vented into space from radiator vanes.

IN AMBER CLAD

Built at the shipyards above Reach, *In Amber Clad* was the "youngest" of sixteen frigates that began final assembly together at SinoViet Naval Yard AS-9. Less than two years after entering service, *In Amber Clad* was the last of its group, her sister ships destroyed in the grim fighting retreats over Paris IV, Iota, and Arcadia. After partial repairs and replenishment at Tribute the ship was assigned to Lieutenant Commander Miranda Keyes on April 7, 2550. She would be the ship's last captain.

After Earth came under attack by the Prophet of Regret's fleet, which had arrived in the city of New Mombasa searching for secrets, *In Amber Clad* was one of few vessels close enough to follow the Prophet when he departed through a slipspace portal, heading for Delta Halo. At the ring, *In Amber Clad* deployed ODSs and marines to support the Master Chief on his mission to kill the Prophet of Regret, and another team led by Sergeant Major Johnson to recover the installation's Activation Index.

TWIN BOOM

The upper boom of *In Amber Clad* contains fire control systems and pulsed power storage for the MAC fitted in the lower boom.

ARCHER PODS

Anti-ship missiles with various warhead options.

SENSOR ARRAY

Active phased array scanner panel.

HANGAR MODULES

Each hangar can launch or recover one dropship at a time.

PELICAN

Stalwart-class frigates carry six Pelicans and associated support equipment.

PLAGUE HULK

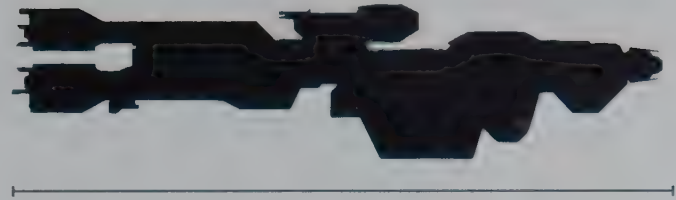
In Amber Clad was boarded and overwhelmed when the Flood escaped containment on Delta Halo. After the bulk of the Gravemind was transported aboard, *In Amber Clad* was used to carry the parasite directly into the Covenant capital of High Charity. The ravenous Flood combat forms and infection spores carried within then boiled out to assimilate every thinking being who stood in their way.

STALWART-CLASS LIGHT FRIGATE

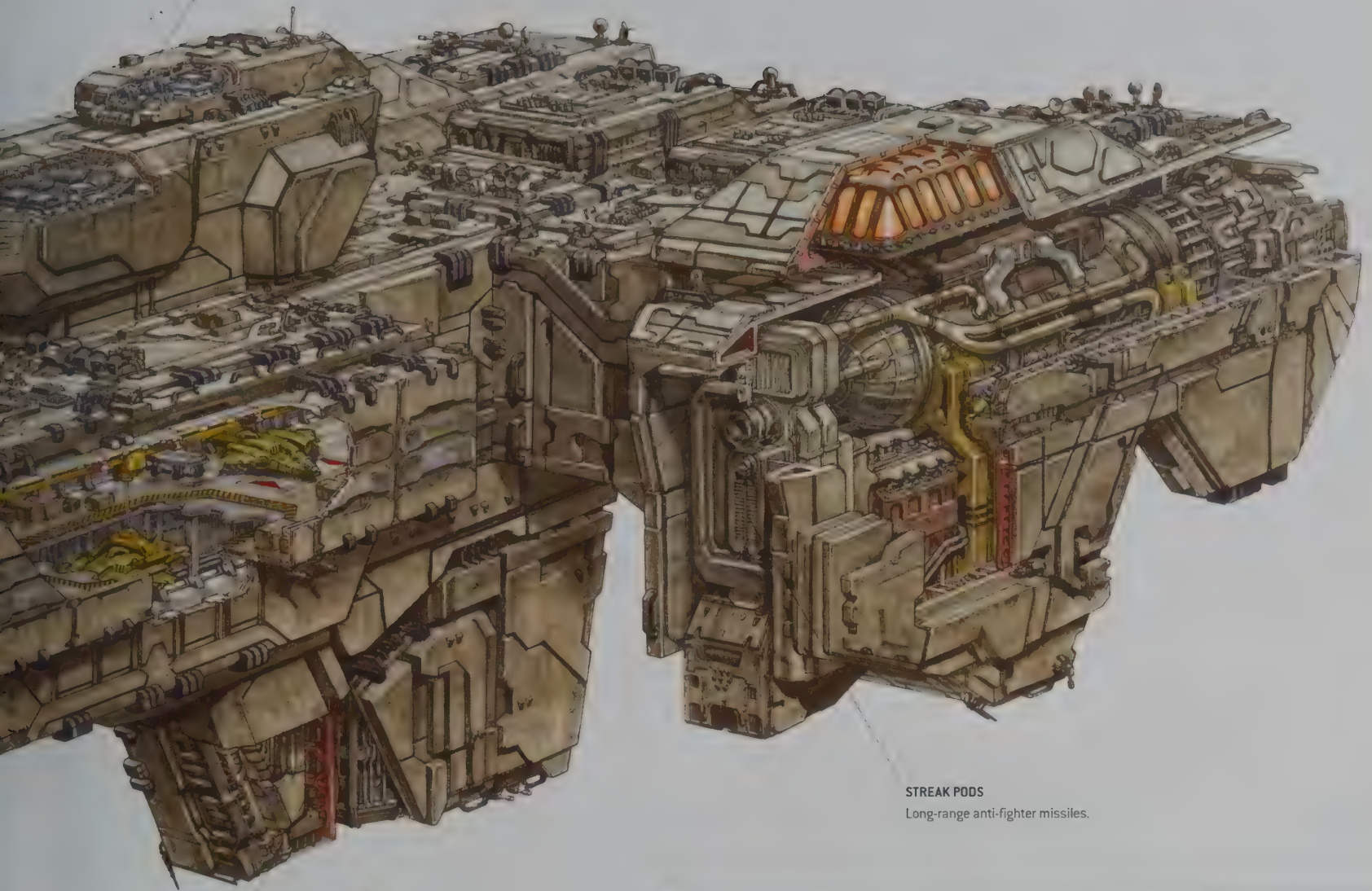
BRIDGE

The bridge has life support that will function even if the rest of the ship is crippled.

HEIGHT: 112 meters



LENGTH: 478 meters



STREAK PODS

Long-range anti-fighter missiles.

DROP POD LAUNCHER

Magazine-fed coilgun accelerator for drop pods.

DROP POD

The ODSTs aboard *In Amber Clad* were veterans of the long war against the Covenant, but even they were unprepared for what they found on Delta Halo.



SPECIFICATIONS

Launched February 9, 2547; destroyed November 3, 2552

HULL CODE: FFG-142

NAVAL ARCHITECTS: Distinguished Naval Engineer David Pulver; Dr. Eugene Taylor

MANUFACTURER: SinoViet Naval Yard AS-9, Reach

MASS: 0.93 million metric tons

MANEUVER DRIVE: 2x OKB Karman 56K fusion drives

TRANSLIGHT ENGINE: Starwerx FTL-290C (Series IV CODEN)

CREW: 250 Navy

TROOPS: 200 Marines; 64 ODST

ARMAMENT: 1x 56A2D4 Magnetic Accelerator Cannon; 16x M58 Archer missile pods; 76x M340A4 Streak missile pods; 6x M870 Rampart point defense guns; 52x M710 Bulwark point defense guns

COMPLEMENT: 6x D77-TC Pelican dropships; 12x M12 Warthog all-terrain vehicles; 6x M808 Scorpion tanks, 24x SOEIV drop pods

FRIGATES

Frigates are flying MAC guns that rely on their speed, low sensor signature, and sheer weight of numbers to engage enemy capital ships. To compensate for their relative fragility, frigates maneuver and attack as a synchronized group to minimize exposure to plasma torpedoes and energy projectors.

UNSC HEAVY FRIGATE STRIDENT-CLASS

MANUFACTURER: Aerofabrique SA

HULL CODE: FFG (Heavy Frigate)

ROLES: Escort; attack

CREW: 190 Navy

TROOPS: None

LENGTH: 575 meters

MASS: 1.1 million metric tons

ARMAMENT: 94B1E6 Magnetic Accelerator Cannon; 1x M4093 Hyperion missile silo; 5x Mark 55 Castor naval coilguns; 2x M42 Archer missile pods; 6x Mark 57 Arena point defense guns; 6x M870 Rampart point defense guns

Designed late in the Covenant War, the *Strident*-class implements hard-earned lessons from earlier frigate designs and was the testbed for streamlined manufacturing techniques intended to accelerate production. The final design is a lean and lethal warship that blurs the line between destroyer and frigate.

POST-WAR FRIGATES

Frigates fulfill a number of roles in the UNSC Navy, from convoy escort to troop transport. In the aftermath of the Covenant War hundreds of multi-purpose *Strident*- and *Anlace*-class frigates are being assembled in shipyards above Mars and Tribute to replace combat losses and engage remnant Covenant forces occupying the former Outer Colonies.

HYPERION SILO

Strident-class frigates carry three massive Hyperion missiles for attacking targets of strategic significance. It requires several minutes to load and prepare each missile.

▲ BOOSTER FRAME

The OV92/EVA Booster Frame is a heavily-armed, open-frame space fighter specifically designed for use by Spartan operatives to quickly engage Covenant forces in deep space and disable or board ships of high strategic significance.

HEAVY MAC

The 94B1E6 heavy MAC and its twelve massive capacitor banks give the *Strident* firepower comparable to destroyers and light cruisers. The small size of the frigate limits the amount of ammunition carried, but most UNSC combat operations take place near supply depots.

BRIDGE

The *Strident* features a state-of-the-art combat management system, and a datacore capable of hosting a smart AI ship director. The AI and automated systems handle target detection, threat evaluation, tracking, and calculation of firing solutions—the crew sets target priority and authorizes weapons release.

ENGINE ARMOR

Easily replaceable Titanium-A armor panels protect the delicate engines

ENERGY SHIELDING

Production delays mean most *Strident*-class ships are not fitted with energy shielding, though small generators capable of sealing the hangar and main airlocks are standard. Channels for waveguides and bay sockets for emitters are installed, making final integration of energy shields a straightforward process once modules are available.

POINT DEFENSE GUNS

Rampart turrets are point defense emplacements combining quad-mount coilguns and a targeting scanner. Each Rampart evaluates incoming threats and sets the ammunition to either sub-caliber armor-piercing sabots or proximity detonation fragmentation shells on a target-by-target basis

PELICAN DROPSHIP

A single Pelican is housed in an internal hangar, but three more can be carried on hull clamps.

► CASTOR NAVAL AUTOCANNONS

The Castor is a large railgun that fires a variety of specialized ammunition, including experimental shield-piercing rounds. The *Strident*-class mounts five turrets fitted with the Castor, three of which are in a “Quickshot” configuration paired with two smaller Arena gauss cannons.



CARRIERS

The UNSC Navy has always been a carrier-heavy force, with massive supercarriers forming the core of major expeditionary fleets as command ships while various tactical carriers fill a similar role for smaller battlegroup and defensive fleets.

UNSC HEAVY CARRIER EPOCH-CLASS

MANUFACTURER: SinoViet Heavy Machinery

HULL CODE: CV (Heavy Carrier)

ROLES: Support; interdiction; escort

CREW: 1,300 Navy

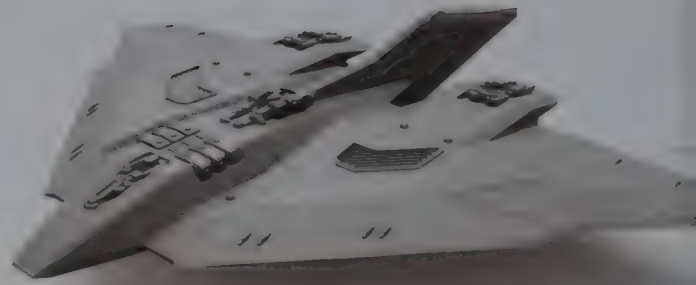
TROOPS: 800 Marines

LENGTH: 2,563 meters

MASS: 35 million metric tons

ARMAMENT: 1x 56A2F9 Magnetic Accelerator Cannon; 2x Mark 15 Breakwater naval coilgun batteries; 12x M66 Sentry autocannon turrets; 20x M4020 Bident missile pods; 70x M58 Archer missile pods; 12x M870 Rampart point defense guns; 20x M810 Helix point defense guns

Epoch-class heavy carriers formed the core of many naval battle groups during the Insurrection and early years of the Covenant War. Each ship carries both aerospace units and ground troops, and is capable of projecting UNSC naval power by dominating the orbital high ground, then deploying strike fighters and troop transports to high-value areas on the surface.



▲ LONGSWORD

The C709 Longsword is a long endurance spacecraft used by the UNSC Navy in a variety of combat roles. Large and imposing, this model of Longsword was widely used throughout the Covenant War, as its weapon loadout could be tailored for a variety of missions and needs. Too large to be carried in most hangars, the C709 docks to ships using clamps and access umbilicals.

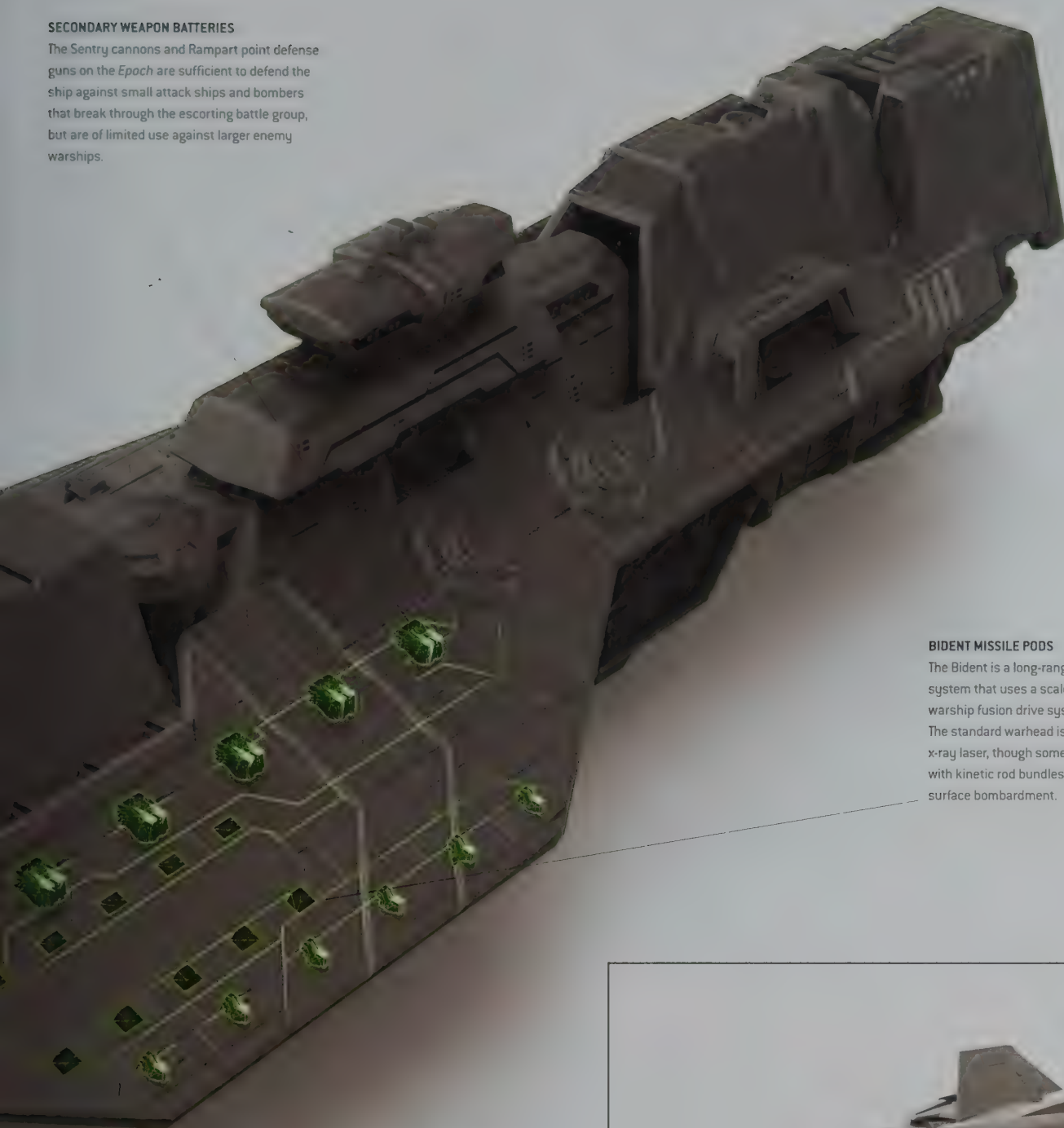
LIGHT MAC

The 56A2F9 Magnetic Accelerator Cannon is a rapid-fire variant of the system installed on *Stalwart*-class frigates. Though intended as a defensive weapon, the *Epoch*-class often added its firepower to coordinated MAC volleys in order to overwhelm and shatter the Covenant's advanced energy shields.



SECONDARY WEAPON BATTERIES

The Sentry cannons and Rampart point defense guns on the *Epoch* are sufficient to defend the ship against small attack ships and bombers that break through the escorting battle group, but are of limited use against larger enemy warships.



BIDENT MISSILE PODS

The Bident is a long-range anti-ship missile system that uses a scaled-down version of warship fusion drive systems for propulsion. The standard warhead is a nuclear-pumped x-ray laser, though some missiles are fitted with kinetic rod bundles or fusion warheads for surface bombardment.

PELICAN DROPSHIP

An *Epoch* has twelve hangar bays, each of which holds three dropships and two fighters.

FLIGHT CREW

Carrier flight crews are a mix of Navy and Marine personnel, administratively divided into what are nicknamed "Blue" and "Green" sides, respectively. The crew wear colored jerseys to distinguish their function while working within the hangar and supporting flight operations: red for ordnance handlers, white for safety personnel, green for technicians, and so on.



▲ SABRE

The Sabre program's goal was to offer the UNSC a swift, versatile, and utterly lethal defense interceptor that could engage Covenant forces in deep space and low orbit, preventing them from establishing a dominant position before ground operations commenced. While only a few hundred Sabres were produced before war's end, operational squadrons racked up an impressive kill count.

INFINITY

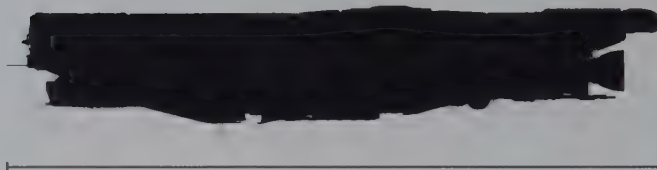
UNSC *Infinity* is by far the most potent ship ever built by humanity, incorporating technologies and manufacturing techniques decades ahead of their time. The vast quantities of resources needed for its construction pushed Earth to its limit during the Covenant War, draining resources and personnel that would otherwise have been used in defense of the colonies. However, *Infinity* served a larger mission that justified the sacrifice: a potential lifeboat for the human species if the alien empire could not be stopped. *Infinity* was finished too late to sway the outcome of the Covenant War, but arrived just in time to have a major impact on its aftermath.

FLAGSHIP OF THE FLEET

The *Infinity* serves as ambassador for the UEG and flagship of the UNSC Navy, conducting dangerous but strategically important missions throughout the Orion Arm. Under the command of Captain Thomas Lasky, *Infinity* has been instrumental in defending Earth and her colonies, protecting diplomats at interspecies peace talks, and exploring new worlds.

HEIGHT: 1,041 meters

INFINITY-CLASS SUPERCARRIER



LENGTH: 5,694 meters

SPECIFICATIONS

Launched March 22, 2553

HULL CODE: INF-101

NAVAL ARCHITECTS: VADM Elizabeth Sark, CDR Oscar Greyson, Dr. Dana Wolff, Dr. Sada no Okuni

MANUFACTURER: Special Assembly Plant Concord, Sol

MASS: 907 million metric tons

MANEUVER DRIVE: XR2 Boglin Fields S81/X fusion drive (primary)

TRANSLIGHT ENGINE: Mark X Macedon/Z-Prototype #78720HDS Revision 2.1

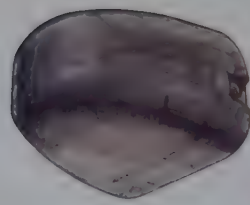
CREW: 8,900 Navy; 1,700 ONI; 480 UEG; 24 Swords of Sanghelios; 8 Special Assets

TROOPS: 5,400 Marines; [REDACTED] Spartans; 800 Army; 750 ODST; 200 Air Force

ARMAMENT: 4x CR-03B Series 8 Magnetic Accelerator Cannons; 350x M42 Archer missile pods; 250x M75 Rapier missile pods; 190x M97 Lance missile pods; 500x M96 Howler missile pods; 85x M85 Scythe anti-aerospace turrets; 10x Mark 2551 Onager MAC turrets; 830x M965 Fortress point defense guns

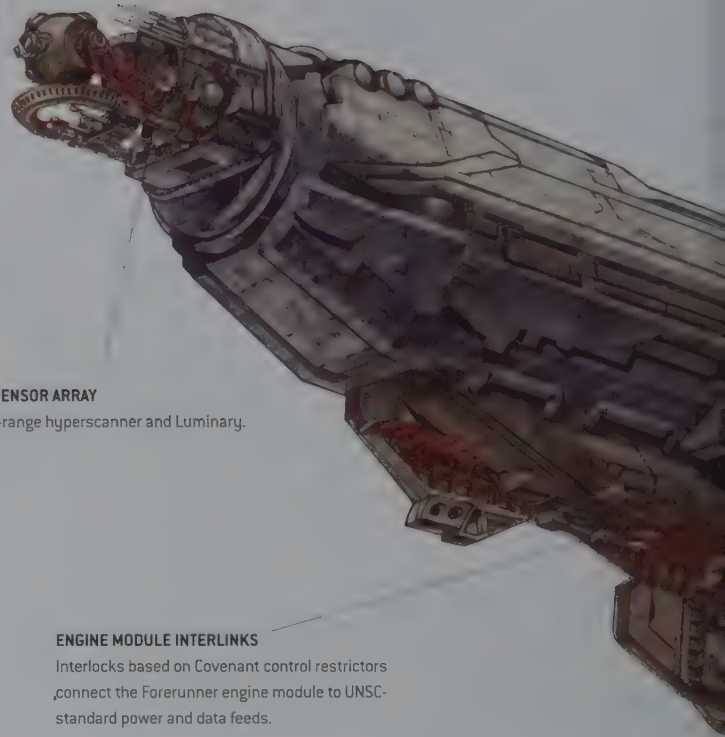
SHIELDING: Misriah Armory MG-44N Heavy Dispersal Field Generators

COMPLEMENT: 10x *Anlace*- or *Strident*-class frigates; 8x D96 Albatross cargo dropships; 150x D-79H-TC Pelican dropships or F-41E Broadsword fighters; 10x M510 Mammoth mobile bases; 560x M12 Warthog all-terrain vehicles; 80x M850 Scorpion tanks; 329x M9407 SOEIV drop pods; 124x M8823 HEV drop pods



AFT SENSOR ARRAY

Long-range hyperscanner and Luminary.

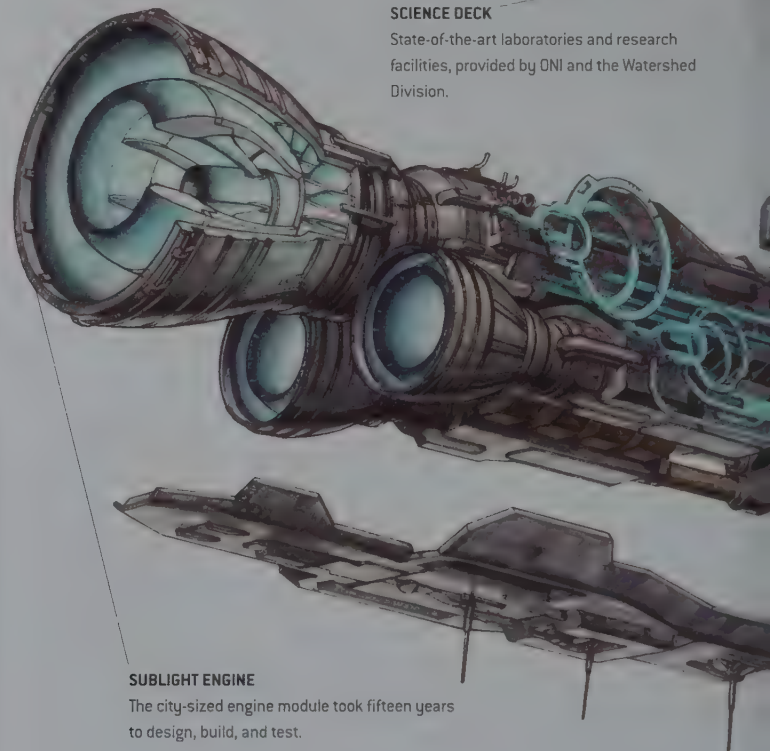


ENGINE MODULE INTERLINKS

Interlocks based on Covenant control restrictors connect the Forerunner engine module to UNSC-standard power and data feeds.

SCIENCE DECK

State-of-the-art laboratories and research facilities, provided by ONI and the Watershed Division.



SUBLIGHT ENGINE

The city-sized engine module took fifteen years to design, build, and test.

2558 RETROFIT

The *Infinity* completed a maintenance and overhaul cycle late in 2558, with several hull sections and weapon systems swapped out for pre-manufactured modules intended for its incomplete sister ship, the *Eternity*. Integration of these systems is ongoing.

MEMORIAL PARK

The atrium area contains garden plots and activity centers under an artificial skydome.

CREW QUARTERS

The *Infinity* is almost entirely self-sufficient, with facilities and comforts normally only seen on colony support ships.

WAR GAMES

Infinity contains several training areas, including the second-largest military simulation and test environment in the human sphere.

MAGNETIC ACCELERATOR CANNONS

Each CR-03B MAC can fire kill packages, deliver cargo pods, and even launch small spacecraft

WAVECOM DATALINKS

Supraluminal communication system.

FORERUNNER TRANSLIGHT ENGINE

The translight engine of the *Infinity* is built around a recovered Forerunner slipspace drive core of extraordinary power. This ancient mechanism can draw upon foaming vacuum energy, independent of the ship's fusion power plants.

MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNITS

A Marine expeditionary division and drop battalion of ODSTs is permanently assigned to the ship. These troops are organized into five task forces, each of which can operate independently.

COMMAND BRIDGE

Captain Thomas Lasky and his executive officers are found here.

SUB-VESSEL BAYS

Ten internal hangars and docking clamps allow the *Infinity* to carry and support its own small fleet of frigates.

PROJECT: OUROBOROS

The R&D work that resulted in *Infinity* was one of several pillars within Project: OUROBOROS, the UEG's ever-evolving plan for the continuance of human civilization. A hedge against extinction, *Infinity* was first imagined as a mobile colony to carry survivors to distant stars in the event of social collapse triggered by the Insurrection, Covenant, or other catastrophe. Many of its supporters were unaware that it was eventually repurposed for a military role. The sensitive nature of these plans and potential impact on UNSC morale meant construction of the *Infinity* was undertaken in strict secrecy.

DROPSHIPS

Tactical aerospace lifters, more commonly known as combat dropships, are multi-mission vehicles that carry troops and other equipment directly onto the battlefield from orbiting spacecraft. UNSC dropships are expected to conduct vertical take-offs and landings on rough terrain and are certified for carrying multi-tonne cargoes at supersonic speeds while conducting evasive maneuvers.

UNSC DROPSHIP D77-TC PELICAN

MANUFACTURER: Misriah Armory
DESIGNATION CODE: D (Dropship)
ROLES: Transport
CREW: 2 pilots + 10 passengers
LENGTH: 30.5 meters
MASS: 138 metric tons
ARMAMENT: 1x M370 70mm chaingun

Pelicans are the ubiquitous workhorse dropships of the UNSC, ferrying troops, supplies, and combat vehicles from orbiting carriers or distant staging areas to combat zones. When prepped for launch a Pelican can load troops, attach a vehicle to the rear cargo clamp, take off, and deploy its passengers and vehicle to any point on a planet within a matter of hours.



▲ CARGO BAY

The Pelican typically accommodates ten infantry in jumpseats, each with a small overhead container for their equipment. The large center aisle can be filled with cargo pallets, seating benches for another ten passengers, casualty litters, or even small utility vehicles. A heavy machine gun, grenade launcher, or gauss cannon can be fitted to articulated mounts at the rear of the bay to provide covering fire when the loading ramp is dropped.

COUNTERMEASURES

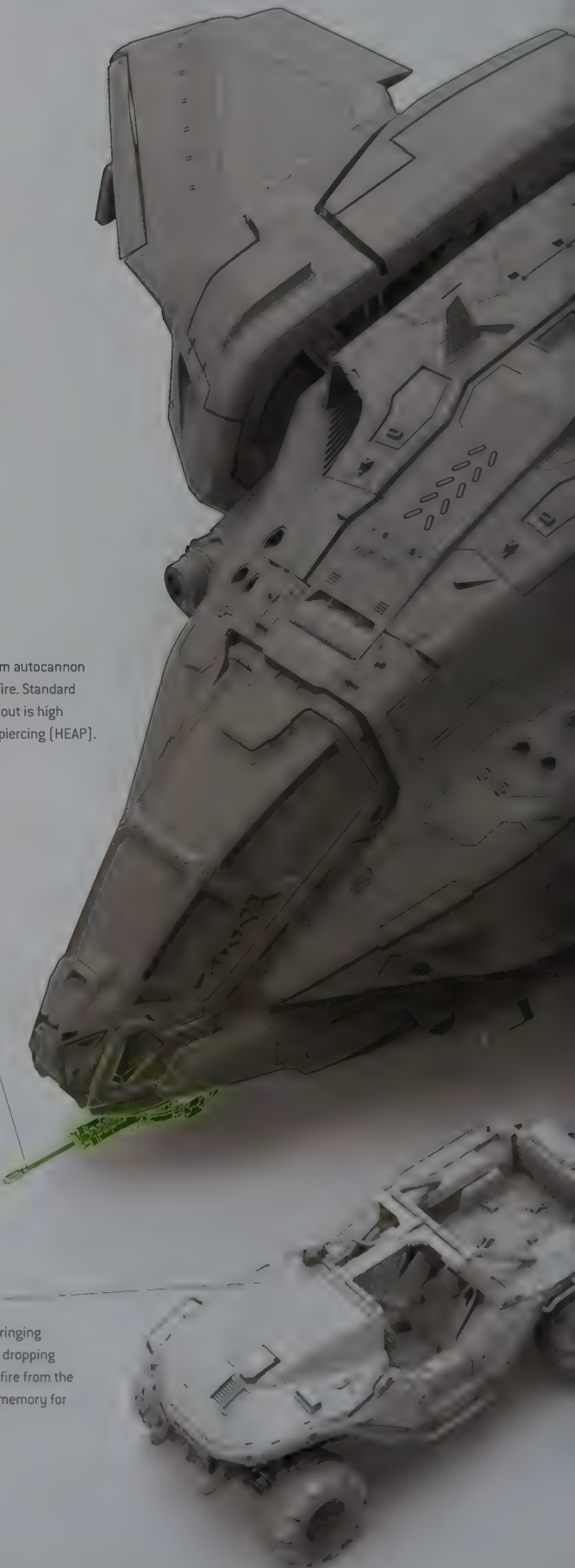
UNSC aerospace vehicles are fitted with a suite of countermeasures to warn of incoming attacks, break target locks, and mitigate the effects of electronic warfare. These include wide-spectrum flares, microdrone decoys, rainbow laser blinders, radar/lidar detectors, directional jammers, and "hard chop" guillotines on data processing modules that could be susceptible to cyberintrusion agents.

CHAINGUN

Retractable 70mm autocannon for suppressing fire. Standard ammunition loadout is high explosive armor piercing (HEAP).

WARTHOG

The sight of Pelicans bringing in reinforcements and dropping Warthogs while under fire from the Covenant is an iconic memory for many UNSC veterans.



GRAVITIC ASSIST

A basic gravitic control system used in atmosphere for stability control and supplemental lift.

CARGO CLAMP

The magnetic and physical locks of the aft cargo clamp can hold a number of different payloads, including Scorpion tanks and cargo pods. Carrying objects in the clamp is highly discouraged for orbital insertions as it complicates reentry.

HYBRID FUSION DRIVE

Pelicans use a complicated propulsion system that combines vectored-thrust fusion ram-rockets with air-breathing hyperfans in two primary and two secondary articulated engine pods. In vacuum, the ram-rockets require hydrogen reaction mass. The Pelican carries enough fuel for two ground-to-orbit trips.

WEAPON PYLONS

Two reinforced hardpoints per wing that can hold a variety of weapon systems or specialized equipment pods.

► COCKPIT

The D77 Pelican features a tandem cockpit. The pilot sits on the right, with the electronics operator/gunner to the left. All flight controls on the Pelican are digital fly-by-light with no manual backups; an integral expert system optimizes stability and adjusts thruster profiles under all regimes and cargo profiles. Access to the cockpit is from the cargo bay.



PROWLERS

Prowlers are stealth warships that minimize their visual and sensor signature through the use of low-observable design features, cyberintrusion suites, and electronic warfare. These ships almost never directly participate in battle, and are expected to quietly observe and record even in the face of UNSC defeat: standing orders include avoiding lifepods and ignoring rescue beacons.

UNSC STEALTH CORVETTE WINTER-CLASS

MANUFACTURER: The Watershed Division

HULL CODE: PRO (Prowler)

ROLES: Infiltration; VIP transport

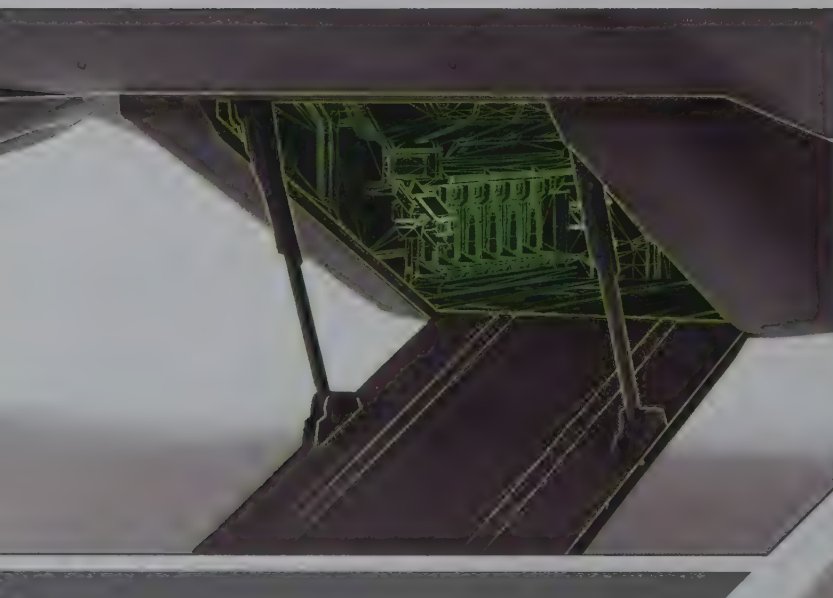
CREW: 2 crew + 20 passengers

LENGTH: 84.2 meters

MASS: 907 metric tons

ARMAMENT: 2x M8545 coilguns; 1x CBU-R68 Moray mine rack

Smaller and more compact than most prowlers, with an aerodynamic shape that reflects its use for planetary infiltration and deployment of ground teams, *Winter*-class vessels were among the most advanced vessels used by ONI during the latter years of the Covenant War.



▲ TRANSPORT

Many prowler operations during the Covenant War involved ferrying ONI strike teams and high-yield nuclear warheads close to heavily-defended invasion beachheads and staging areas. Most were one-way missions.

STEALTH SHIPS

Though not completely invisible, Prowlers are difficult to detect and categorize; all distort their emissions and sensor profile to appear as low-threat vessels, wreckage, or even friendly ships. Prowler captains are highly trained in concealment and deception, and the crew are adept at the deployment of remote drone networks and covert field teams to divert attention from the ship itself.

ACTIVE PROTECTION SYSTEMS

When stealth fails, the *Winter*-class prowler is fitted with three pop-up turrets, each of which houses two anti-missile pulse lasers and an electronic warfare countermeasures dispenser. The dispenser can release a variety of consumables such as heat sinks and deception jammers to mislead enemy scanners and break target locks.

BRIDGE

The bridge on a *Winter*-class has five crew stations, but it requires only a commander and navigator to function. On infiltration missions a technician, tactical director, and surveillance controller will also be accommodated.

HYPERSCANNER ARRAY

The designers of the *Winter*-class prowler had access to many cutting-edge technologies, including threat warning and tracking systems derived from analysis and repurposing of Covenant sensors



▲ BAFFLED FUSION DRIVE

Prowler engines are constantly upgraded and rebuilt to take advantage of new technologies. Experimental and cutting-edge, these engines and their control software are now only dimly related to mainline UNSC fusion drive technology, and only ONI technicians are qualified to maintain them.

POST-WAR UPGRADES

Integration of prototype active camouflage systems and emission distortion grids enhance these vessels' inherent stealth capabilities, allowing upgraded *Winter*-class prowlers to avoid or confuse all but the most comprehensive detection techniques and sensor networks. These modified vessels have the Experimental (IX) hull code.

LOW OBSERVABLE DESIGN

Though they feature the best jamming systems available to ONI, prowlers rely primarily on their passive stealth features to remain undetected. Techniques employed include breaking up the ship's thermal emissions with metamaterials in the hull plating, programmable optical camouflage coating, and heat sinks to defer release of thermal emissions



WARTHOG

The cargo bay can hold any UNSC utility vehicle, up to and including the Warthog

PROWLER CORPS

UNSC prowlers are crewed by a clandestine division of the Navy's Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), known semi-officially as the "Prowler Corps." Though they all begin as Navy officers, members of the Prowler Corps have traditions and secrets unique to their insular group, separating them from the rest of ONI. Even their recruitment program is unorthodox, as no records exist of how they select candidates or where they train personnel.

SPIRIT OF FIRE

The *Spirit of Fire* is a heavily upgraded *Phoenix*-class colonial support vessel, tasked with deploying ground troops and prefabricated firebase facilities in support of UNSC expeditionary operations. Cavernous cargo bays that once held prefabricated domiciles and atmosphere processors now hold mobile armories and Pelican dropships, and its modular factory system was upgraded and retooled to produce the latest UNSC military hardware—including self-assembling base modules which can be drop-deployed directly to combat zones.

ARCHER PODS

Though the ship's store of missiles is practically bottomless, the limited number of launch tubes restricts the ship's bombardment capability.

As a civilian ship the *Spirit of Fire* participated in the latter stages of the Domus Diaspora, making perilous slipspace trips to distant worlds in order to establish terraforming facilities and factories on behalf of the UEG and megacorporations. For half a century the vessel was a vital part of Earth's colonization program, including operations to set up infrastructure on what became Arcadia and Verent. It was not until the height of the Insurrection that the *Spirit of Fire* was transferred to UNSC control and refitted as a fleet support ship for frontier military expeditions.

HANGARS

Darter cargo dropships and orbital transfer vehicles are held in the eight primary transfer bays on the ship's flanks. These hangars connect to an immense cargo hold that stretches from one side of the ship to the other.



THE SECOND ARK CONFLICT

After assisting in the initial campaign to retake the colony Harvest and blunting a Covenant offensive at Arcadia in 2531, the *Spirit of Fire* disappeared, and the ship was eventually declared "lost with all hands." It reappeared in 2559, when the crew awakened from cryosleep above the Forerunner's Ark, having reached its extragalactic location through unknown means.

OBSERVATION DECK

Crammed with storage tubes, datataps, tables, and tools, this area has been commandeered to serve as a laboratory and workshop by the sole civilian on board, Professor Ellen Anders.

MISSING SLIPSPACE DRIVE

The ship's slipspace drive was sacrificed to destroy a Forerunner shield world and its fleet of dreadnoughts, which the Covenant sought to control. Unfortunately, slipspace cores are one of the few things the ship's factory systems cannot replicate.

RECREATION BLOCK

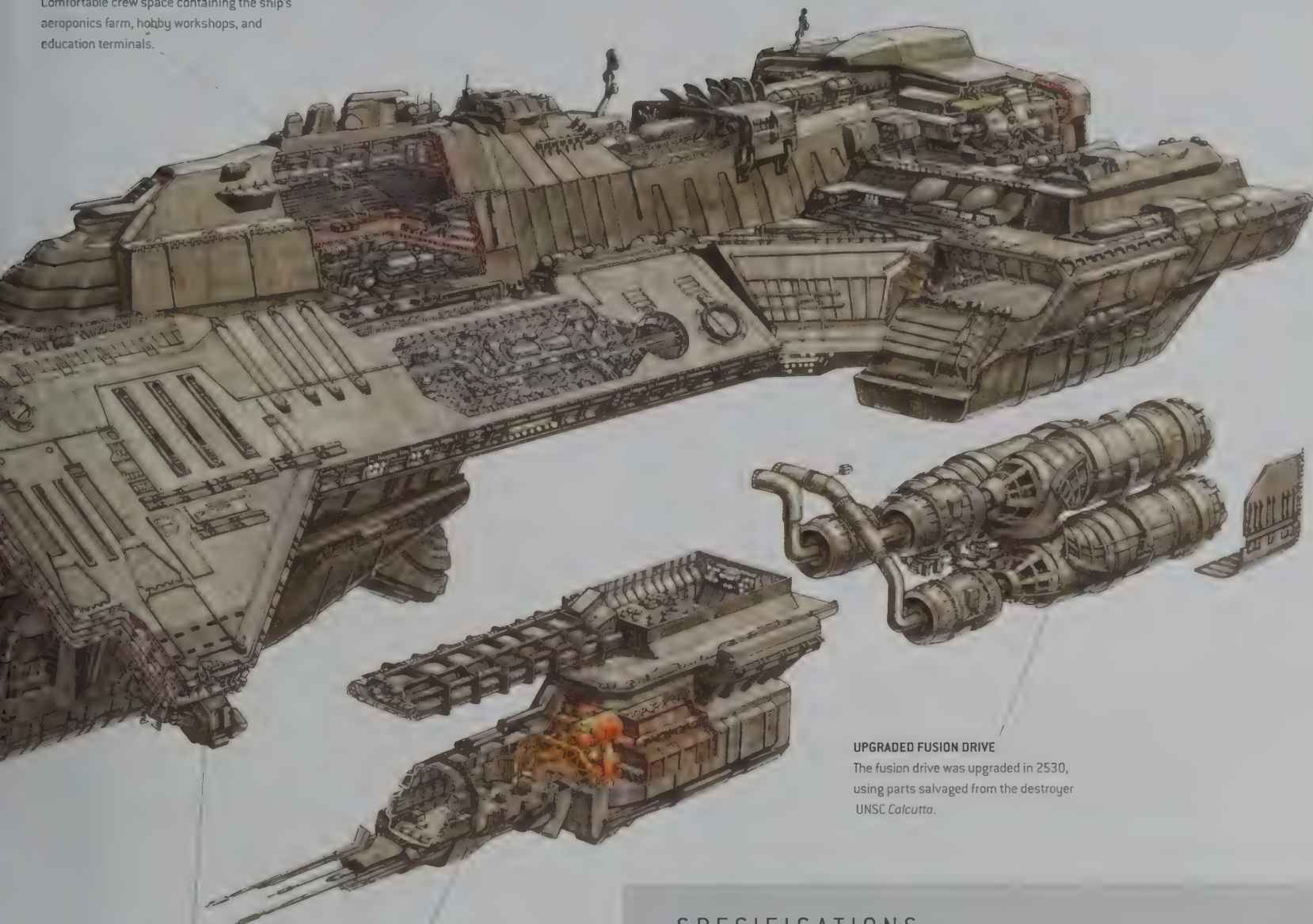
Comfortable crew space containing the ship's aeronics farm, hobby workshops, and education terminals.

PHOENIX-CLASS SUPPORT SHIP (REFIT)

HEIGHT: 689 meters



LENGTH: 2,500 meters



HERON CARGO DROPSHIPS

The *Spirit of Fire* carries ten Heron heavy-lift cargo dropships, each of which can deploy prefabricated base structures or ground forces at a moment's notice.

WAR FACTORIES

The *Spirit of Fire* is fitted with robotic factory lines capable of producing virtually every vehicle or prefabricated structure in the UNSC inventory, given access to the appropriate materials and design templates. The ship was fortuitously overstocked with parts and supplies before it deployed to Harvest, in preparation for a sustained siege.

UPGRADED FUSION DRIVE

The fusion drive was upgraded in 2530, using parts salvaged from the destroyer *UNSC Calcutta*.

SPECIFICATIONS

Launched January 2, 2473

HULL CODE: CFV-88

NAVAL ARCHITECTS: First Engineer Brandon Hines; VADM Shauna Glasgow

MANUFACTURER: Halifax Spacewerx, Luna

MASS: 44 million metric tons

MANEUVER DRIVE: 6x Orphios Energy Systems Jupiter-1 (primary)

TRANSLIGHT ENGINE: OKB Karman 11E (CODEN Series III)

CREW: 3,500 Navy; 1 UEG

TROOPS: 6,000 Marines; 2,000 Army; 1,000 ODST

ARMAMENT: 3x 22B6R3 Magnetic Accelerator Cannons; 10x 11A2R1 naval coilgun batteries; 24x M42 Archer missile pods; 40x M800 Rampart point defense guns

COMPLEMENT: 10x D20 Heron heavy-lift dropships; 6x D96 Albatross cargo dropships; 56x D82 Darter cargo dropships; 70x D77 Pelican dropships; 178x M12 Warthog all-terrain vehicles; 93x M808 Scorpion tanks; 600x M8823 HEV drop pods

DROP PODS

Most UNSC assault forces make their combat landings via armed dropships, but troop carriers are slow, and subject to intense anti-aerospace fire. To counter this problem, the UNSC developed drop pods and techniques for “transorbital support interdiction” early in the 22nd century. This method of deployment was heavily utilized to surprise and cut off human rebels during the Insurrection, and proved to be an effective—but costly—technique to temporarily outmaneuver Covenant invasion forces.

UNSC DROP POD

*M8823 SINGLE-OCCUPANT EXOATMOSPHERIC
INSERTION VEHICLE*

MANUFACTURER: Ushuaia Armory

HULL CODE: HEV (Drop Pod)

ROLES: Orbital insertion

CREW: 1 passenger

LENGTH: 5.5 meters

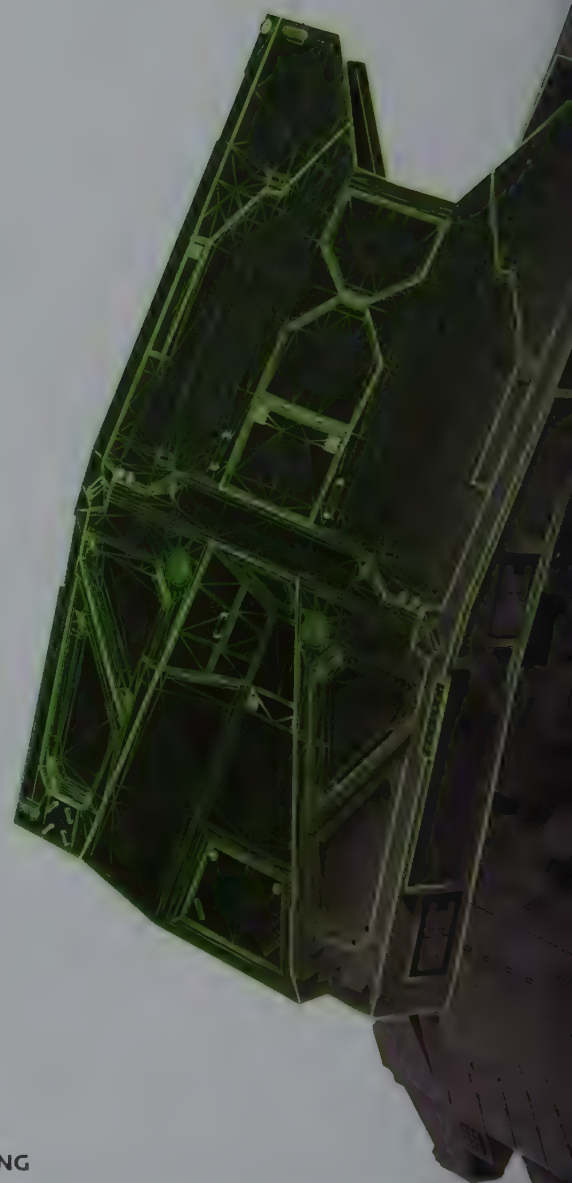
MASS: 870 kilograms

ARMAMENT: None

ODST combat drops consist of dozens—even hundreds—of drop pods deployed in quick succession by a spacecraft undergoing evasive maneuvers. The pods quickly vector to multiple landing zones on autopilot-controlled flight tracks that minimize their exposure to enemy attack and detection.

POD DOOR

The door and airframe of the M8823 are armored with Titanium-A. Immediately after landing the hatch is expelled by explosive bolts, allowing the occupant to quickly engage the enemy. In emergencies the pod door can be used as impromptu cover, but ODST doctrine is to break out of the landing zone as quickly as possible, even if the enemy immediately attempts to contain and crush the attack force.



◀ SEATING

Within a standard SOEIV the ODST sits in a crash web, with only minimal inertial dampening and comfort features. The ODST has basic controls for adjusting the pod's course, though an expert system directs the pod's descent and evasive maneuvers. The commander's drop pod is equipped with high-powered communications gear, a battlenet relay for coordinating with other UNSC forces, and sensor drones which can be deployed after landing.





FEET FIRST

UNSC insertion protocols call for the commander's pod to lead from the front rank of the combat drop. The reasons for this rule include the principles that officers should lead rather than follow, should be willing to do anything their troops are asked to do, and should expose themselves to the same level of danger as their subordinates. The most compelling reason, however, is the need to collect, sort, and organize the troops the moment they exit their pods. Experience demonstrates that whatever drop troops manage to accomplish during the first "golden hour" on the ground will have a disproportionate effect on the success or failure of the entire mission.

DROGUE PANELS

After drop pods enter the atmosphere they conduct evasive maneuvers and release decoys to minimize exposure to enemy fire. After the SOEIV has penetrated the atmosphere, the upper exterior panels separate, stabilizing and slowing the pod's descent. Braking rockets engage one kilometer above the target zone

CARGO STORAGE

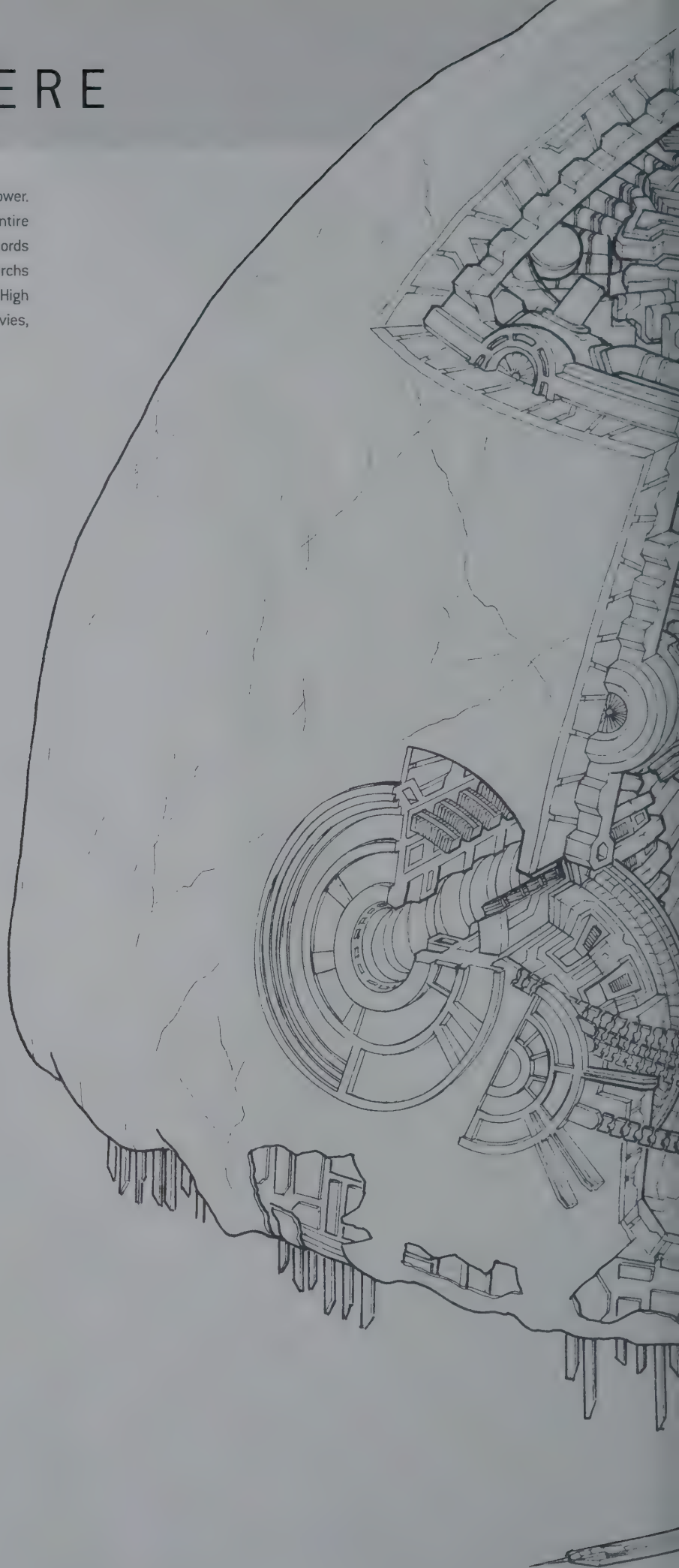
Upon landing, each pod is stripped of its store of extra weapons, ammo, and other supplies, which are hauled to the unit's temporary base camp. ODSIs are trained to operate without external support for long periods, if necessary.

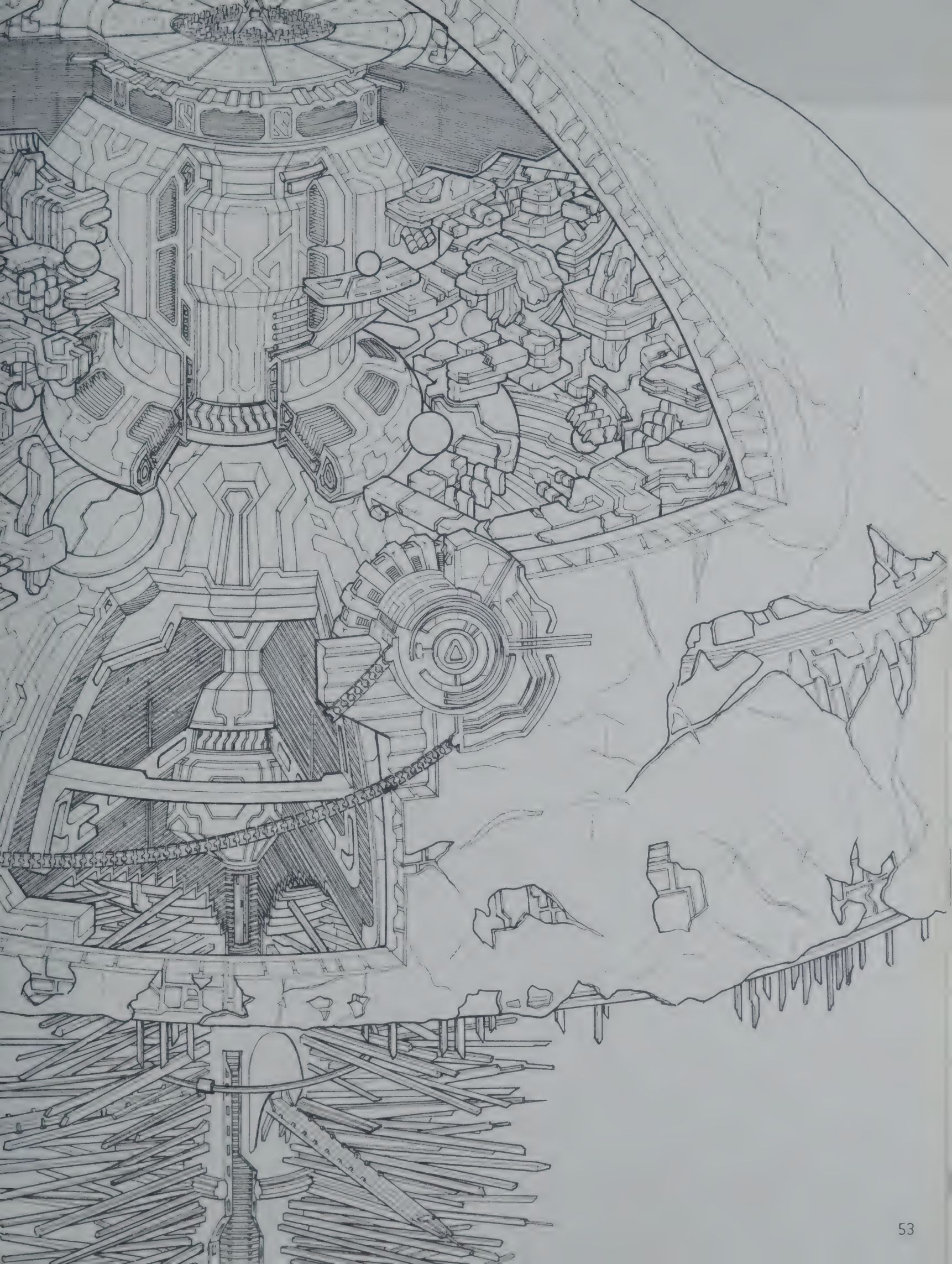
HELLJUMPERS

Informally known as "Helljumpers," Orbital Drop Shock Troopers are a special operations unit within the UNSC Marine Corps. ODSI training and culture emphasizes independence, flexibility, and aggressive action in the face of overwhelming odds

COVENANT SPHERE

The Covenant controlled thousands of star systems at the height of its power. So vast was the Prophets' realm and so complex its administration that entire colonies and sub-domains occasionally vanished from High Charity's records for decades before contact was re-established. While three Prophet Hierarchs directed the Covenant's strategy and held ultimate executive power, it was the High Council who managed day-to-day administration, assignment of tithes and levies, and allocation of resources to member worlds.





COVENANT WORLDS

With the loss of High Charity, the administration of Covenant worlds fell first to Prophet governors and then—after their exodus—to local warlords and factional leaders eager to build new empires in their own image.

SANGHELIOS

A world of extremes, the beauty and dangers of this cradle world shaped the Sangheili into warriors, scholars, and survivors.

SYSTEM: Urs [primary], Fied, Joori

SATELLITES: Qikost, Suban

POPULATION: 3.9 billion

Sanghelios is the cradle and government world of the Sangheili people, though the latter honor is contested by other major colonies. The Arbiter's Swords of Sanghelios alliance control much of the planet, though several key religious and industrial sites are controlled by Covenant holdouts and independent states. Civil war continues to rage across the surface, undoing millennia of progress as factions engage in political bickering and honor vendettas which topple temples and leave cities in ruins.



HESDUROS

The frontier world of Hesduros is a stronghold for the resurgent Covenant.

SYSTEM: Aspero

SATELLITES: Hral, Nakton

POPULATION: 1.9 billion

Hesduros was a remote Sangheili colony rich in history but poor in political power, known as a haven for isolates and traditionalists. Insular and conservative, the keeps of Hesduros worshiped the Forerunners and maintained a monastic lifestyle. The destruction of High Charity and later the arrival of Jul 'Mdama bearing symbols of the Didact galvanized the population and inflamed their religious fervor. Though 'Mdama is dead, his Hesduron zealots still seek to return all Sangheili to the path of Forerunner enlightenment—at the point of an energy sword, if necessary.



EAYN

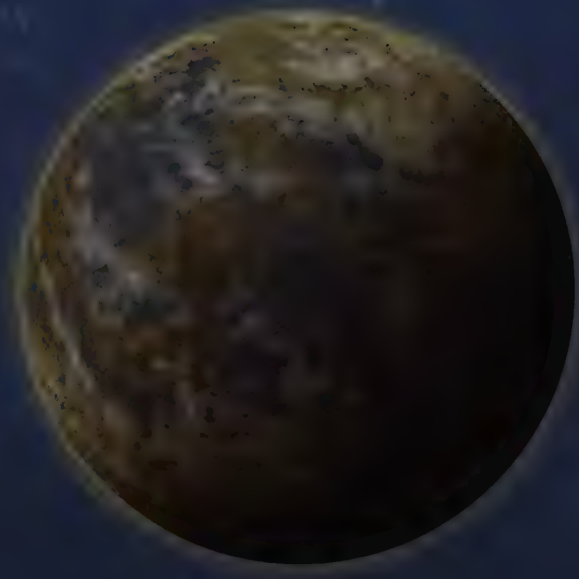
The Kig-Yar queens of Eayn control both predatory trading fleets and pirate flotillas.

SYSTEM: Y'Deio

SATELLITE OF: Chu'ot [Y'Deio III]

POPULATION: 978 million

Orbiting the gas giant Chu'ot, Eayn is the homeworld of the Kig-Yar species, though few place any importance on that fact. Always a world of conspiracy and violence, Eayn was never fully integrated into the Covenant and its warring rookeries kept few ties with their independent kin in remote colonies. Endless cycles of unification and civil war continued on Eayn throughout the Covenant period, though an uneasy peace now prevails. With stability returning, the alliance of arch-matriarchs on Eayn seeks increased influence and wealth through trade and the careful application of violence.



DOISAC

Even scarred by nuclear war and endless conflict between rival packs, Doisac dominates the hearts and minds of all Jiralhanae.

SYSTEM: 0th Sonin

SATELLITES: Warial, Soirapt, Teash

POPULATION: 12.5 billion

Without the Prophets' guidance, or the powerful chieftains that served them, the Jiralhanae have again divided into clans bound by blood, oath, and mutual interest. Conflict periodically flares on Doisac's surface, while the moons of Warial and Teash host Jiralhanae raiding parties and former Covenant shipmasters. Though their society is fragmented, decades under Covenant domination taught the Jiralhanae the value of cooperation and planning, and gave them a sense of purpose and destiny.



MALUROK

Harsh, barren Malurok is a world of industry and fortresses used by the Covenant to gather, train, and equip legions of troops as well as fleets of ships.

SYSTEM: Greaw [primary], Jomel

SATELLITES: Tehmed, To'val

POPULATION: 2.1 billion

While the surface appears inhospitable from a cursory examination, beneath Malurok's surface are labyrinthine cities and elaborate halls that house millions in comfort. Proud to the point of insolence, the Sangheili kaidons and Yanme'e hive queens who settled this world have managed their own affairs for centuries, though the bureaucrats on High Charity could never find fault with the quality or quantity of their tithes. With the Prophets gone, Malurok's ambitions are unleashed.



BALAHO

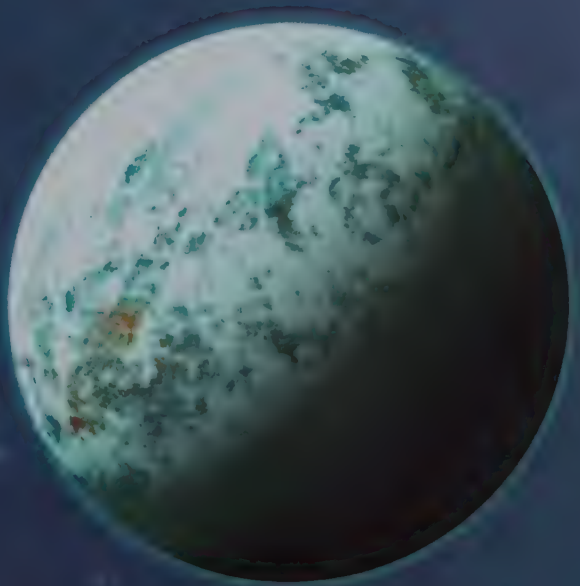
Sleeping Unggoy dream of Balaho's dire marshes and long to return.

SYSTEM: Tala

SATELLITES: Buwan, Padpad

POPULATION: 320 million

Always a world of danger and unpredictability, Balaho has grown less hospitable over the centuries as environmental degradation and Covenant tithes stripped its remaining resources. Little of value remains on Balaho, and even its two moons were hollowed out to feed the forges of High Charity. Once nearly destroyed by overpopulation, the planet is now practically empty of life, after billions of Unggoy were shipped off to fight the Covenant's wars. Abandoned and forgotten, the remaining den mothers struggle to hold society together and ensure a better future for the species.



HIGH CHARITY

GRAND ESTATES AND HIVE VAULTS

Dozens of floating city-stations housed tens of millions in conditions befitting their station within the Covenant's rigid caste system.

High Charity was a physical symbol of the San'Shyuum-Sangheili alliance for nearly three millennia, built on an immutable spire of the gods and crowned by one of their foremost chariots, the keyship. Over the millennia of Covenant expansion and conquest, High Charity gorged on the wealth of hundreds of worlds, with its three High Prophets and the Covenant High Council directing all religious and secular activities in the empire's vast and diverse territories.

SPECIFICATIONS

Built during First Age of Reconciliation [c. 791 BCE]; Destroyed in Ninth Age of Reclamation [December 11, 2552]

CLASS: N/A

NAVAL ARCHITECTS: Minister of the Hearth Laka Mowai; First Assembled Choir of Builders

MANUFACTURER: The Supernal Chorus

MASS: 100 trillion metric tons (estimated)

MANEUVER DRIVES: Wings of Malygus (uncategorized Forerunner artifact)

TRANSLIGHT ENGINE: Sefom Invictus (uncategorized Forerunner artifact)

CREW: 3 Hierarchs; 23.8 million citizens; 7.7 billion Menials

TROOPS: 15,000 Obedientaries; 290,000 Warriors; 2 million Thralls

ARMAMENT: 32x superheavy plasma lances or equivalent; 1,900x plasma beam emitters or equivalent

SHIELDING: Pavise of Urs (uncategorized Sangheili artifact)

COMPLEMENT: Numbers beyond counting

TRUTH AND TREACHERY

After High Charity arrived at Delta Halo, the High Prophet of Truth implemented his scheme to depose the Sangheili from power in the Covenant. Civil war raged inside the capital and among the surrounding fleets as Truth's Jiralhanae allies enacted long-planned treachery. Unfortunately, the Flood took advantage of the conflict and boarded High Charity, quickly infesting the station and leading Truth to abandon the population and many of his allies to a fate far worse than death.

HIGH CHARITY



THE FOUNTS

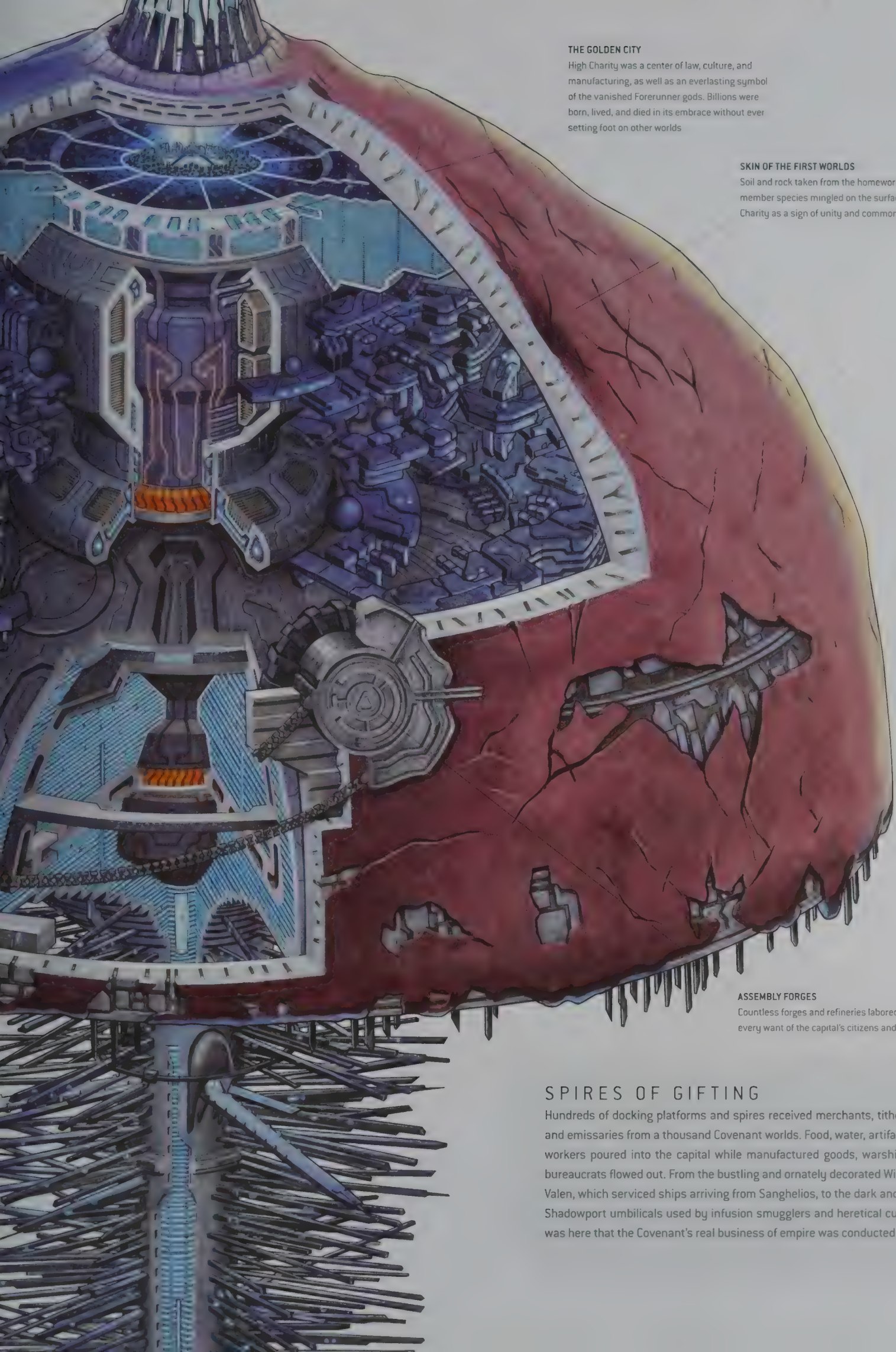
High Charity's great furnaces paled in comparison to the power tapped from the Forerunner keyship's half-sleeping engines.

LANCES OF THE FAITHFUL

Hundreds of weapon-cores were reverently collected from Forerunner god-machines to guard the Holy City.

UNBREAKABLE SPINE

The inner reaches of High Charity grew cold, silent, and inaccessible a millennium ago.



THE GOLDEN CITY

High Charity was a center of law, culture, and manufacturing, as well as an everlasting symbol of the vanished Forerunner gods. Billions were born, lived, and died in its embrace without ever setting foot on other worlds

SKIN OF THE FIRST WORLDS

Soil and rock taken from the homeworld of every member species mingled on the surface of High Charity as a sign of unity and common purpose

ASSEMBLY FORGES

Countless forges and refineries labored to meet every want of the capital's citizens and armies

SPIRES OF GIFTING

Hundreds of docking platforms and spires received merchants, tithe-fleets, and emissaries from a thousand Covenant worlds. Food, water, artifacts, and workers poured into the capital while manufactured goods, warships, and bureaucrats flowed out. From the bustling and ornately decorated Window of Valen, which serviced ships arriving from Sanghelios, to the dark and violent Shadowport umbilicals used by infusion smugglers and heretical cultists, it was here that the Covenant's real business of empire was conducted.

STRIKECRAFT

In the hands of Sangheili pilots, Covenant strikecraft are war chariots used to attain personal glory, with any military purpose considered secondary. Driven by notions of honor and righteousness, Sangheili pilots hope to accumulate enough acclaim to be allowed to join the chosen few on the ground. The vehicles themselves were not worthy of recognition, and were simply tools to be expended in battle. Though their training emphasizes cooperation and mutual support, the Sangheili pilots' tendency is to split off and engage targets without assistance.

The Jiralhanae had a different relationship with their machines, with pilots jealously guarding those they had claimed and giving them secret names. Clan sigils and Forerunner glyphs were hand-carved into the hulls to signify battle honors and damage scars, and the pilots of each ship formed close-knit packs that ate, fought, and died together. Though they were not given the training allowed to Sangheili, it was Brute Seraph squadrons that human pilots learned to fear the most.

COVENANT STRIKECRAFT *SERAPH (KAI PATTERN)*

MANUFACTURER: Tertiary Assembly Forges

ROLES: Aerospace superiority

CREW: 1 Obedientary

LENGTH: 23.9 meters

MASS: 50 metric tons

ARMAMENT: 4x Tevaas Mu-pattern plasma cannons; 2x Novox-pattern fuel rod cannons

The Seraph is a nimble, lightly shielded, single-man fighter piloted by Sangheili or Jiralhanae. In most fleets, Seraphs are organized into squadrons (or "talons" in Covenant nomenclature) of eight or more strikecraft that split into hunting pairs when on a mission. Though human pilots had significant tactical advantages in many encounters, and often greatly outnumbered the Covenant during initial engagements, the technological superiority of the Seraph was often insurmountable.

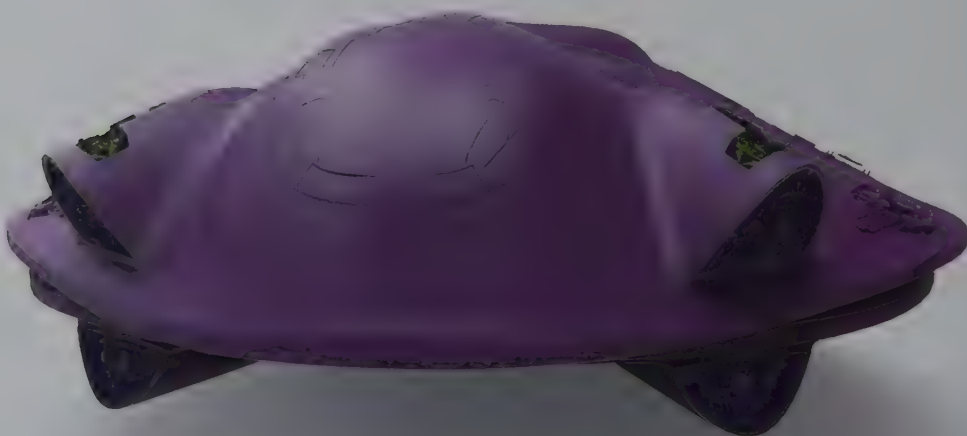
CONTROL POD

Reinforced and armored pilot's station with multi-port connectors for Covenant combat harnesses.



PLASMA CANNONS

Seraphs are armed with four plasma cannons that are fired in twin-linked pairs. On the Kai variant these cannons are offset at angles for better peripheral coverage. Gravitic mirrors installed around each emitter focus and aim the plasma fusillade.



IMPULSE DRIVE

Powered by a small pinch-fusion reactor, impulse drives convert energy and a small amount of exotic matter into thrust, creating a vivid stream of virtual neutrons and photons as a byproduct. Power can be redirected from other systems to temporarily boost acceleration.

MACHINE LINKS

Covenant strikecraft pilots connect to their flight systems using direct neural interfaces, with minimal safety cutouts and filters. The pilot's body is rendered immobile to prevent self-injury, and agony is inflicted in exchange for superior control. Sangheili enter battle meditation before completing a machine link to control the pain, while Jiralhanae embrace the interface burn to trigger their own focus.

HARMONIZATION ARRAY

The tail assembly of the Seraph is a thrust vectoring system for the impulse drive, redirecting the exhaust to increase maneuverability. This array is physically articulated in the Morsam pattern.

MULTIPHASE ENERGY SHIELDING

The Seraph is fitted with energy shield generators that deflect and divert both directed-energy and kinetic attacks. The shields also reinforce the Seraph's inertial compensation system, allowing it to absorb the energy from collisions and impacts that would rip other ships apart.

AUTO REPAIR

Seraph damage control systems dynamically reroute data and power links around critically hit locations and remodel portions of the hull to compensate for aerodynamic instability.

PILOTS

Most Seraph pilots are drawn from the ranks of Obedientaries: veteran warriors who have set foot on the path of command and now must experience every facet of war.

EXECUTIONERS

Dedicated warship classes were rare in the Covenant, as fleets were called upon to conduct as many missions relating to trade and transport as they were to conversion and compliance. Those dedicated to liquidation of threats and enforcement of the Prophets' wishes were usually assigned to the long-range expeditionary fleets and kept far from High Charity, a distasteful reminder that the Great Journey could not be completed without unrefined violence and waste.

The executioners of the Covenant navy had no role except for violence; no design goal beyond military expediency. Luckily for humanity, such ships were too dangerous to be made readily available in times of peace, and the nature of their mission meant that relatively few were available to Covenant fleets early in the war. Those ships recalled from the outer reaches served the Prophets in their campaign against the humans, but gained little honor for their grim work.

COVENANT HEAVY DESTROYER CPV-CLASS (SINARIS PATTERN)

MANUFACTURER: Primary Assembly Forges

ROLES: Compliance

CREW: 4 Superiors; 2 Engineers; 400 Menials

TROOPS: 50 Obedientaries; 100 Warriors; 1,900 Thralls

LENGTH: 1,664 meters

MASS: 115 million metric tons

ARMAMENT: 1x Infernus-pattern superheavy excavation beam; 2x Aljordan-pattern plasma beam emitters; 24x Melusean-pattern heavy plasma cannons; 6x Jaet-pattern plasma torpedo silos; 40x Carnax Et-pattern plasma bombardment mortars; 20x Gon-pattern pulse lasers

A relentless engine of destruction, the CPV-class heavy destroyer remains one of the most feared warship silhouettes across human space. However, its role within the Covenant military was that of a ship for disgraced warriors who had fallen from the path of the Great Journey—crewed by those deemed unstable or unsuitable for service in the regular Ministry fleets. The shipmasters of these vessels had their reputation damaged by disloyalty or disobedience, and have few other paths to return to the rolls of honor.

THE FURNACE

The forward third of the ship is dominated by the pinch-fusion reactor which powers the excavation beam.

◀ CLEANSING BEAM

The massive plasma generator and focusing arrays of the CPV's excavation beam give it the same power and precision as those used on assault carriers. Their operators tuned the beams with unmatched artistry, entwining magnetic fields and plasma to burn sigils into human colonies or carefully extract Forerunner reliquaries hidden on dead worlds.





ARMOR PLATES

Covenant vessels use a lightweight but extraordinarily resilient diamondoid and metal-matrix composite frame, covered by thin plates of nanolaminate armor. Each ship is "grown" in massive assembly forges, built up piece-by-piece by clouds of programmable nanomachines

SIEGE CANNONS

The plasma mortar gunners obey orders without question or mercy, even if that means the incidental loss of faithful Covenant warriors in the target area.

SECONDARY REACTORS

Pinch fusion reactors use artificial gravity generators to initiate and sustain a fusion reaction, replicating conditions inside stars. Pinch fusion reactors generate an enormous amount of power and plasma but are volatile; they detonate with the fury of a small supernova if containment fails.

RELUCTANT ATTENDANTS

CRS-class light cruisers tasked with escorting destroyers and other executioners did so without fervor and could never be counted on to perform more than their basic defensive tasks.

COVENANT MINISTRIES

Strictly speaking, the Covenant lacked a standing military. Instead it possessed a multitude of martial organizations influenced by one or more Ministries; governing bodies that directed vital religious and secular activities on behalf of the three Prophet Hierarchs. Each Ministry competed for prestige and promotion of their orthodoxy until they were all swept up in the Great Schism and ground into dust.

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Assembled on the direct orders of the Prophet of Regret, *Truth and Reconciliation* was under the command of then-Supreme Commander Thel 'Vadamee, who had shown great zeal in exterminating all who interfered with the Great Journey. Assigned to the fleet honored with destroying the human fortress world of Reach, *Truth and Reconciliation* was one of the first ships to trace the destination of the escaping *Pillar of Autumn* and begin pursuit. What they found there brought the crew to their knees: one of the seven Holy Rings that could release a divine wind and propel all who were worthy to holy transcendence.

REPULSOR ENGINE

Repulsor engines use stacked tidal gravity generators which "push/pull" the ship in a desired vector. This generates quantum fluctuations in the ship's wake that are extremely hazardous to nearby vessels, particularly when operating at high "thrust."

MAIN REACTOR

The largest pinch fusion reactor provides the energy needed to ignite plasma torpedoes and charge the excavation beam.

PLASMA TORPEDOES

Inert plasma torpedo cores are roughly cylindrical objects that range between 3-5 meters in length. Thousands are carefully packaged and stored in munition racks before each deployment.

FINAL DAYS

In the chaotic aftermath of the Flood's release on Alpha Halo, *Truth and Reconciliation* was captured by the surviving human forces on the ring, led by ODST Major Antonio Silva. Setting course for Earth, Major Silva ignored warnings that the Flood parasite was still hiding onboard. In response, one of Silva's own officers sabotaged the battlecruiser's controls, causing the *Truth and Reconciliation* to crash and explode on the ring's surface.



HEIGHT: 231 meters

CCS-CLASS BATTLECRUISER



LENGTH: 1,782 meters

ARMORED HULL

Shield-reinforced layers of nanolaminate can withstand even the fury of nearby nuclear explosions.

SPECIFICATIONS

Built during Ninth Age of Reclamation [c. 2531]; Destroyed during Ninth Age of Reclamation [September 22, 2552]

NAVAL ARCHITECTS: Master Shipwright Ssne 'Mowusee; Master Shipwright Nkmo 'Ehtaree

MANUFACTURER: Muse of Yevon, Aanrar Shipyard

MASS: 90.7 million metric tons

MANEUVER DRIVE: 2x Gablien-pattern repulsor engines

TRANSLIGHT ENGINE: Ophon-pattern borer (CODEN Series VI equivalent)

CREW: 8 Superiors; 2 Engineers; 500 Menials

TROOPS: 180 Obedientaries; 2,500 Warriors; 4,100 Thralls

ARMAMENT: 1x Profero-pattern excavation beam; 1x Ignis-pattern plasma lance; 42x Sono-pattern plasma cannons; 16x Serpens-pattern plasma torpedo silos; 50x Gon-pattern pulse lasers

SHIELDING: Corvex-pattern dispersal field generators

COMPLEMENT: 32x Seraph/Tarasque strikecraft; 10x Spirit dropships; 50x Banshee flyers; 48x Wraith tanks; 150x Ghost scouts; 55x insertion pods

BATTLECRUISERS

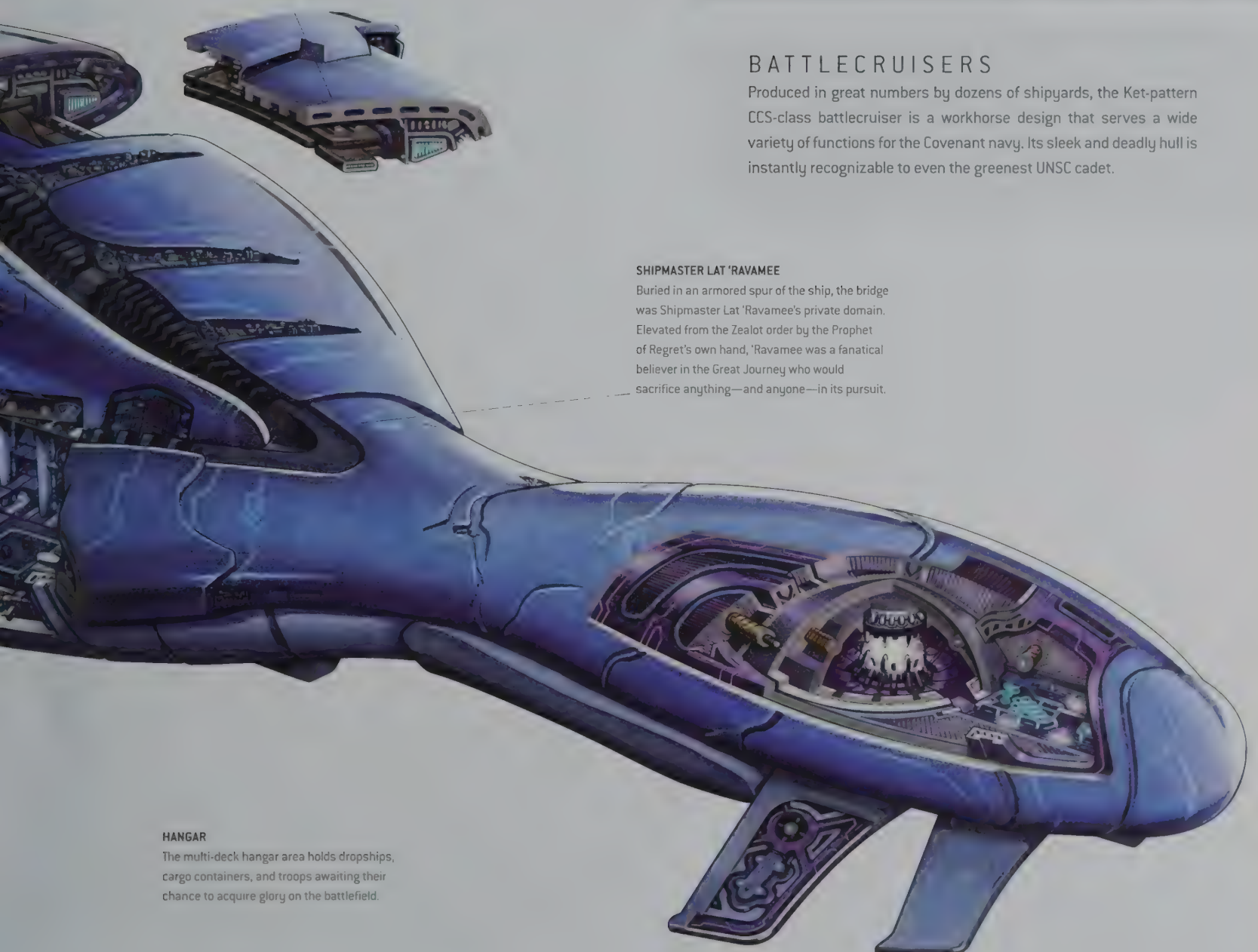
Produced in great numbers by dozens of shipyards, the Ket-pattern CCS-class battlecruiser is a workhorse design that serves a wide variety of functions for the Covenant navy. Its sleek and deadly hull is instantly recognizable to even the greenest UNSC cadet.

SHIPMASTER LAT 'RAVAMEE

Buried in an armored spur of the ship, the bridge was Shipmaster Lat 'Ravamee's private domain. Elevated from the Zealot order by the Prophet of Regret's own hand, 'Ravamee was a fanatical believer in the Great Journey who would sacrifice anything—and anyone—in its pursuit.

HANGAR

The multi-deck hangar area holds dropships, cargo containers, and troops awaiting their chance to acquire glory on the battlefield.



EXAMINERS

Manned by crews blooded in conflict and of undisputed fervor, the Covenant's examiners are extraordinarily powerful warships commissioned in times of great need, and allocated only to those who have proven to be both judicious in action and bold in deed. Their missions determined the fate of entire worlds and species, and only the Hierarchs could grant approval for a Ministry to activate, crew, and deploy one of these mighty vessels. Far more of these great ships survived the Covenant War and Great Schism than many suspect, though they are spread across the far reaches of the Orion Arm and have yet to receive orders to return.

HEAVY CRUISER

ORS-CLASS (VARRIC PATTERN)

MANUFACTURER: Primary Assembly Forges

ROLE: Survey; compliance; command

CREW: 16 Superiors; 70 Engineers; 1,200 Menials

TROOPS: 400 Obedientaries; 6,000 Warriors; 8,500 Thralls

LENGTH: 3,000 meters

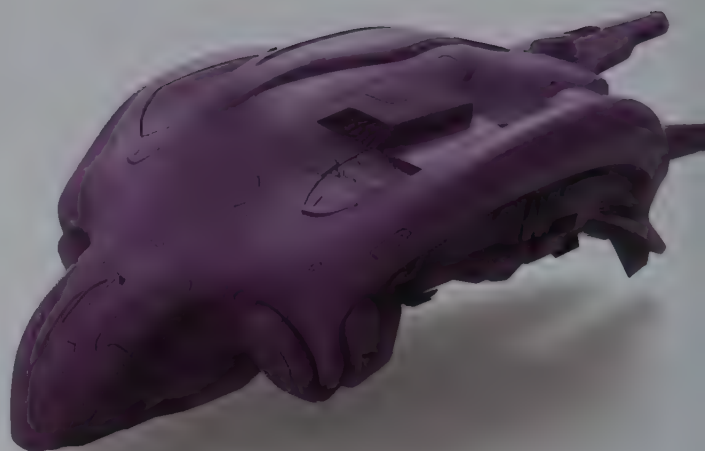
MASS: 200 million metric tons

ARMAMENT: 1x Phar-pattern excavation beam; 1x Ventrax-pattern heavy plasma lance; 3x Felo-pattern plasma beam emitters; 48x Melusean-pattern heavy plasma cannons; 16x Our-pattern plasma torpedo silos; 16x Fet-pattern plasma bombardment mortars; 80x Phot Et-pattern pulse lasers

The first ORS-class heavy cruisers were commissioned to fight the bloody civil wars and slaughters which typified the Covenant's violent Ages of Conflict and Doubt in its early centuries. To the Covenant as a whole, each ORS-class ship is an icon of ancient honor, and their accumulated glory reflects on the hand-picked crews who serve on them. Following the Great Schism, many found themselves in the service of warlords more pragmatic than pious, their glorious names and deeds forgotten as the Covenant's successors squabbled over the ruins of empire.

ANCIENT HULLS

Even by Covenant standards most ORS-class vessels are old, and their operation is difficult and labor-intensive compared to other warships. For example, special interpreters and scholars are needed on the bridge, as many of the ship's controls and data feeds only display now-cryptic messages in early Sangheili dialects.



▲ PHANTOM

Phantoms are fast, heavily-armed assault dropships used by the Covenant to ferry troops, armored vehicles, and prefabricated fortifications from staging areas and carriers directly to the battlefield. Their sleek silhouette remains imprinted in the minds of humanity's veterans, and will remain an enduring symbol of the Covenant War for decades to come.



FORERUNNER HEART

Shrine-cores used in the ORS-class are ancient power plants of various sizes and configurations. These furnaces must be handled carefully; drawing on their untapped potential risks turning the ship into incandescent debris. Its full power is restrained with the devotional seals and interlocks which harness them to Covenant control systems and weapons.

PLASMA LANCE

A heavy energy projector that fires tightly focused streams of high velocity plasma at its enemies. Plasma lances do damage with a combination of thermal and kinetic effects, and at close range are capable of cutting unshielded warships in half.

ENGINEERING

The ship's blessed keepers practice many strange rituals to appease Forerunner security systems locked in the engine's heart

ESCORTS

The crew of CRS-class light cruisers assigned as escorts for heavy cruisers were willing to make almost any sacrifice to be judged worthy to serve aboard the main ship.

COVENANT SHRINE-CORES

The ORS-class was among those blessed with the installation of a shrine-core: irreplaceable relics extracted from dead or dying Forerunner god-machines by Covenant exploration and recovery teams. Though their inner workings are a mystery, each found new purpose and life as a tool of the Prophets, modified and integrated into Covenant vessels with the aid of Huragok savant-technicians.

INSERTION PODS

Covenant orbital assaults are simple, direct applications of power. Unlike the ODSs, who use their drops to achieve a variety of strategic aims, there is only one mission for Covenant troops deployed from orbit: direct assault. Covenant drop troops deploy in insertion pods which range in size from one-seat assault and breaching pods to building-sized mass deployment carapaces that carry entire armies into battle.

COVENANT INSERTION POD INDIVIDUAL ASSAULT CARAPACE {SUSPA AL PATTERN}

MANUFACTURER: Tertiary Assembly Forges

ROLE: Transport

CREW: 1 Warrior

LENGTH: 5.9 meters

MASS: 500 kilograms

ARMAMENT: None

Known as the Suspa AI ("fire seed") to the Covenant, this pattern of small insertion pod was rarely seen, for artisans allied with Zealot military orders jealously guarded the secrets of its construction. Only the most pious of commanders were granted the honor of requisitioning these pods, and only their use in war guaranteed replacements. The collapse of the Covenant has changed little, though the Zealots are now divided in loyalties and exercise less discretion in judging the worthy.

INERTIAL COMPENSATION

The door of the insertion pod contains inertial compensation stasis generators. These mitigate the risk of the occupant being injured or killed during transit and pre-impact deceleration.



◀ SHOCK COUCH

Each insertion pod carries a single warrior cocooned in cushioning gravitic webs, ready for battle the instant the vehicle hits the ground. The interior of the pod and all safety features are optimized for Sangheili use.



CONTROLS

Unlike human equivalents, the Covenant operator has considerable discretion in how the insertion pod maneuvers during a drop.

COVENANT METEORIC ASSAULTS

Each Covenant warrior leaves their ship with the expectation that they alone may survive to reach the surface and carry out the will of the Prophets. The duty of troops in a meteoric assault is particularly clear and simple: complete the mission or die in the attempt. It is a challenge Sangheili relish, but a fate that others in the Covenant reluctantly resign themselves to.

IMPULSE DRIVES

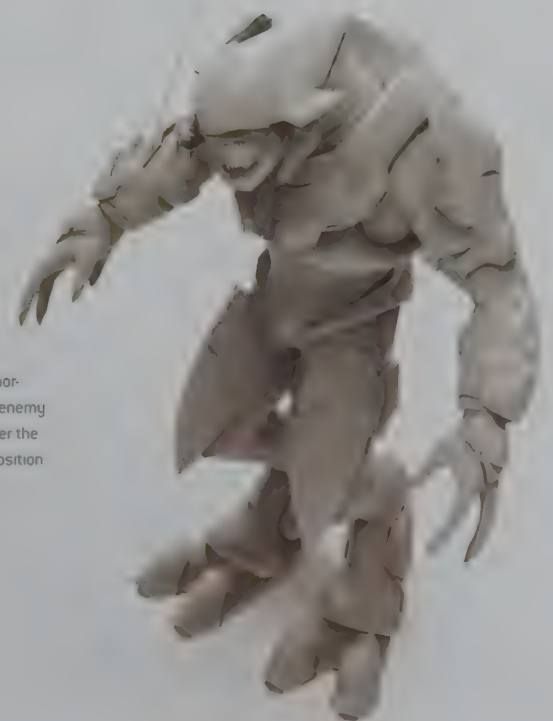
Covenant insertion pods use compact, high-thrust impulse drives to perform evasive maneuvers and brake before impact.

ELITE WARRIORS

Sangheili selected for orbital drops possess an iron will and unquenchable bloodlust. Many were from the Zealot order, or aspired to membership in one of their chapterhouses.

BOARDING PROW

The bottom of the pod doubles as an armor-piercing ram that can punch through an enemy warship's hull or fortified bunker to deliver the warrior directly into the heart of the opposition.



PROCURATORS

Covenant procurators and other support ships that provide sustenance and diversion are never directly under the command of the militant orders or system governors, though their missions are so closely aligned that disagreements are rare. These ships contain assembly forges, grow food for massive resource outposts, and house the Huragok needed for repair of vital Forerunner mechanisms. Availability of procurators was never an issue during the height of Covenant power, for ultimately they are instruments of compliance that reinforce dependency on the Prophets among both colonies and fleets.

In order to restrict the power of the Sangheili and militant factions, there are few means to acquire the dedicated services of support ships except by direct intervention of a Hierarchy. Each Supreme Commander is ultimately responsible for ensuring that this approval is gained and maintained, while also conducting the political machinations needed to ensure warriors, vehicles, and ammunition are delivered at regular intervals.

AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SHIP DSC-CLASS (MJERN PATTERN)

MANUFACTURER: Primary Assembly Forges

ROLES: Food production; seminary

CREW: 1 Precantor; 40 Hieromonks; 10 Celebrants; 110 Superiors; 20 Engineers; 9,800 Menials

TROOPS: 7 Obedientaries; 150 Warriors

LENGTH: 1,550 meters

MASS: 82 million metric tons

ARMAMENT: 12x Melusean-pattern heavy plasma cannon arrays; 8x Jaet-pattern plasma torpedo silos; 20x Pallio-pattern pulse lasers

Long before the Covenant turned its fleets against humanity, their ships journeyed far and wide in search of relics and species to put on the Great Journey's path. Bulk transports and barges based on High Charity supply the need for food, water, and power cells for most fleets, but the DSC-class and its sister ships provide support to Covenant forces that venture further from established supply lines, utilizing their hydroponic pods for food production, hunting grounds for recreation, and great maintenance forges to mend the fleet's arms and armor.

HUNTING DOMES

The stately hunting domes serve as training areas, recreational zones, cloisters of worship, and animal paddocks. Each support ship can support multiple unique biomes, though most replicate environments comfortable to the San'Shyuum and Sangheili. A few service the peculiar needs of other species, including vermiaries that sustain Lekgolo colonies transplanted from their home on Te.

LAST EXILES

The shipmasters of Covenant support ships were minor Prophets who served the fleet's Supreme Commander as a religious authority, logistics coordinator, and mediator. The Prophet of Truth lured many such bureaucrats into his service before the Great Schism with promises of wealth and privilege, turning their vessels to support his Jiralhanae fleets. With the loss of High Charity and death of Truth they fled, abandoning the Covenant to join the surviving San'Shyuum in exile.

TERTIARY ASSEMBLY FORGES

Factories and workshops aboard each support ship produce food packs, maintenance kits, clothing, and even small arms for the fleet. Excess production is shipped to High Charity for redistribution.



PROSELYTIZATION NETWORK

Mediator consoles and relays for the Covenant-wide supraluminal communication network. Through the proselytization network the Prophets reach faithful hearts to coordinate military and administrative activities across the empire's many worlds.

GENECRAFTER VAULTS

The Ministry of Preparation built and maintained specialized support ships fitted with arcane instrumentation and a staff of surgeons to create Prelates—genetically-enhanced San'Shyuum super-soldiers

▼ REN

The Ren is a small Covenant utility shuttle of San'Shyuum origin. It is fitted with four impulse drives and is nearly as fast and maneuverable as a Seraph fighter, though most are not armed. The Ren's compact slipspace drive makes it a fantastically valuable vehicle for traders and smugglers.

LIGHT CRUISER

The Prophets called upon their remaining loyal shepherds before departing known space.

SHADOW OF INTENT

The *Shadow of Intent* is a massive assault carrier that harbors legions of Sangheili warriors and their panoply of war at the command of the Arbiter, Thel 'Vadam. *Shadow of Intent* performs vital roles for the Swords of Sanghelios alliance by reacting to Covenant incursions, conducting diplomatic trips to remote colonies to grow support, eliminating marauders from resource colonies, and pursuing San'Shyuum war criminals.

SPECIFICATIONS

Built during Third Age of Discovery [c. 2135]

NAVAL ARCHITECTS: Prophet of Expediency Giehel Vange; Vice-Minister of Sacral Assembly

MANUFACTURER: Lathe of the Enlightened, Song of Victory

MASS: 2.7 billion metric tons

MANEUVER DRIVE: 3x Raphyus-pattern repulsor engines

TRANSLIGHT ENGINE: Primus-pattern borer (CODEN Series VI equivalent)

CREW: 200 Superiors; 10 Engineers

TROOPS: 40,000 Warriors

ARMAMENT: 1x Infernus-pattern superheavy excavation beam; 2x Urpeon-pattern superheavy plasma lances; 8x Luxor-pattern heavy plasma beam emitters; 24x Mictix-pattern heavy plasma torpedo silos; 700 Ferriel-pattern pulse lasers

SHIELDING: Tantalus-pattern Dispersal Field Generators

COMPLEMENT: 64x Seraph strikecraft; 192x Banshee Fighter strikecraft; 20x Tick boarding pods; 44x Phantom dropships; 8x Phantom gunboat assault ships; 3x Scarab platforms; 600x Banshee flyers; 196x Wraith mortar tanks; 44x Shadow transports; 700x Ghost scouts; 250x Insertion pods

COMBAT DAMAGE

The deeper crew compartments of the *Shadow* were wrecked and hastily sealed during fierce hand-to-hand boarding actions between Sangheili and Jiralhanae during the Great Schism.

SHIPMASTER RTAS 'VADUM

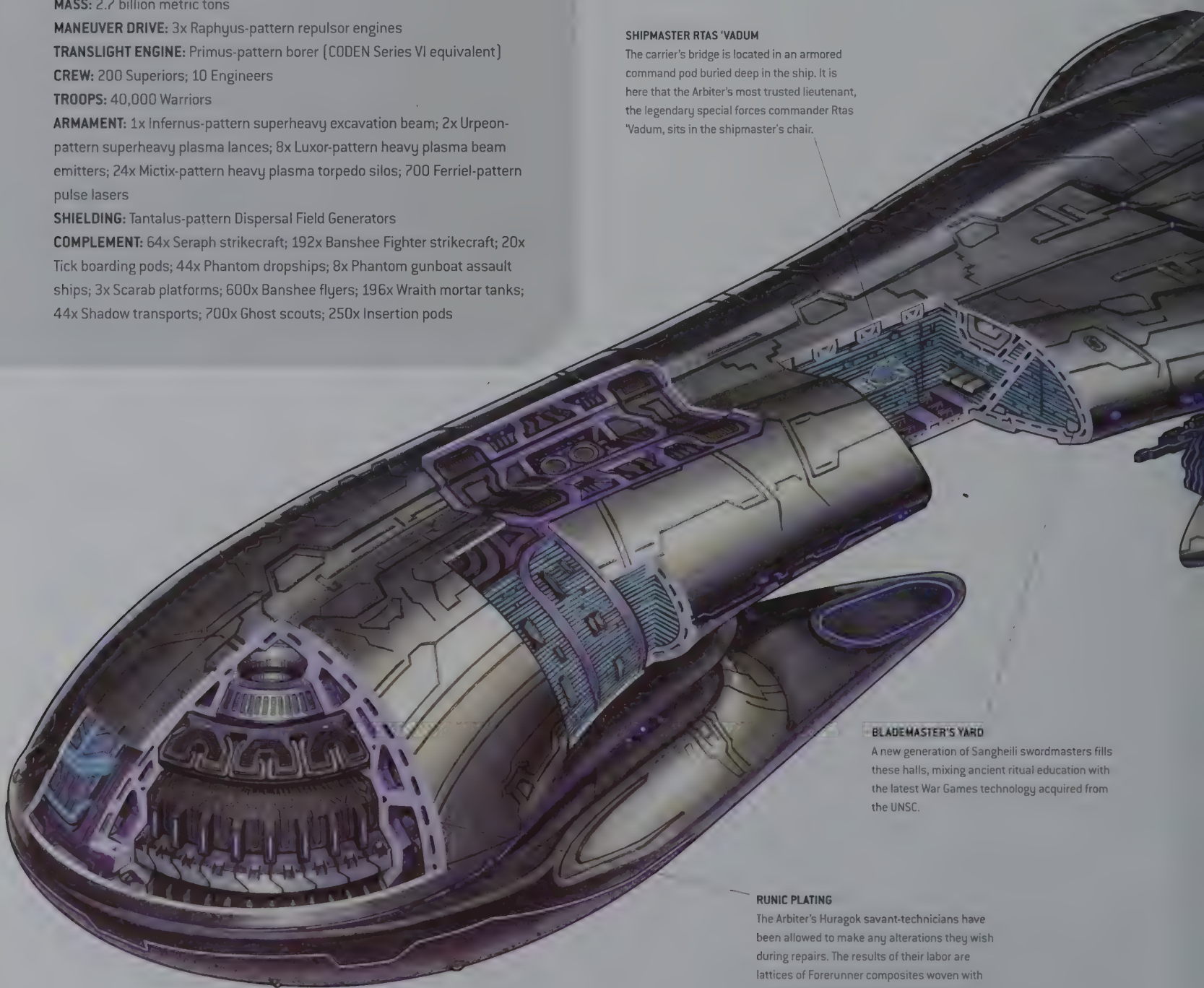
The carrier's bridge is located in an armored command pod buried deep in the ship. It is here that the Arbiter's most trusted lieutenant, the legendary special forces commander Rtas 'Vadum, sits in the shipmaster's chair.

BLADEMASTER'S YARD

A new generation of Sangheili swordmasters fills these halls, mixing ancient ritual education with the latest War Games technology acquired from the UNSC.

RUNIC PLATING

The Arbiter's Huragok savant-technicians have been allowed to make any alterations they wish during repairs. The results of their labor are lattices of Forerunner composites woven with new energy conduits of unknown purpose.



ASSAULT CARRIERS

Each CAS-class assault carrier was a cornerstone of Covenant expeditionary and compliance fleets. Their crews had the weighty responsibility of ensuring that the light of the Prophets illuminated all who were worthy, and cleansed those who faltered along the Great Journey. The Swords of Sanghelios have the equally daunting task of undoing all that the Covenant accomplished in order to build a better tomorrow.

MAIN REACTOR

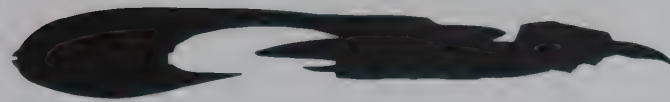
Nonessential ship systems have been rendered inert or disconnected, allowing the output of the main pinch-fusion reactor to be diverted entirely to weapons and propulsion.

ENGINEERING

The best and brightest artisan-armormers of the Swords of Sanghelios can be found here, along with "consultants" from Venezia.

CAS-CLASS ASSAULT CARRIER

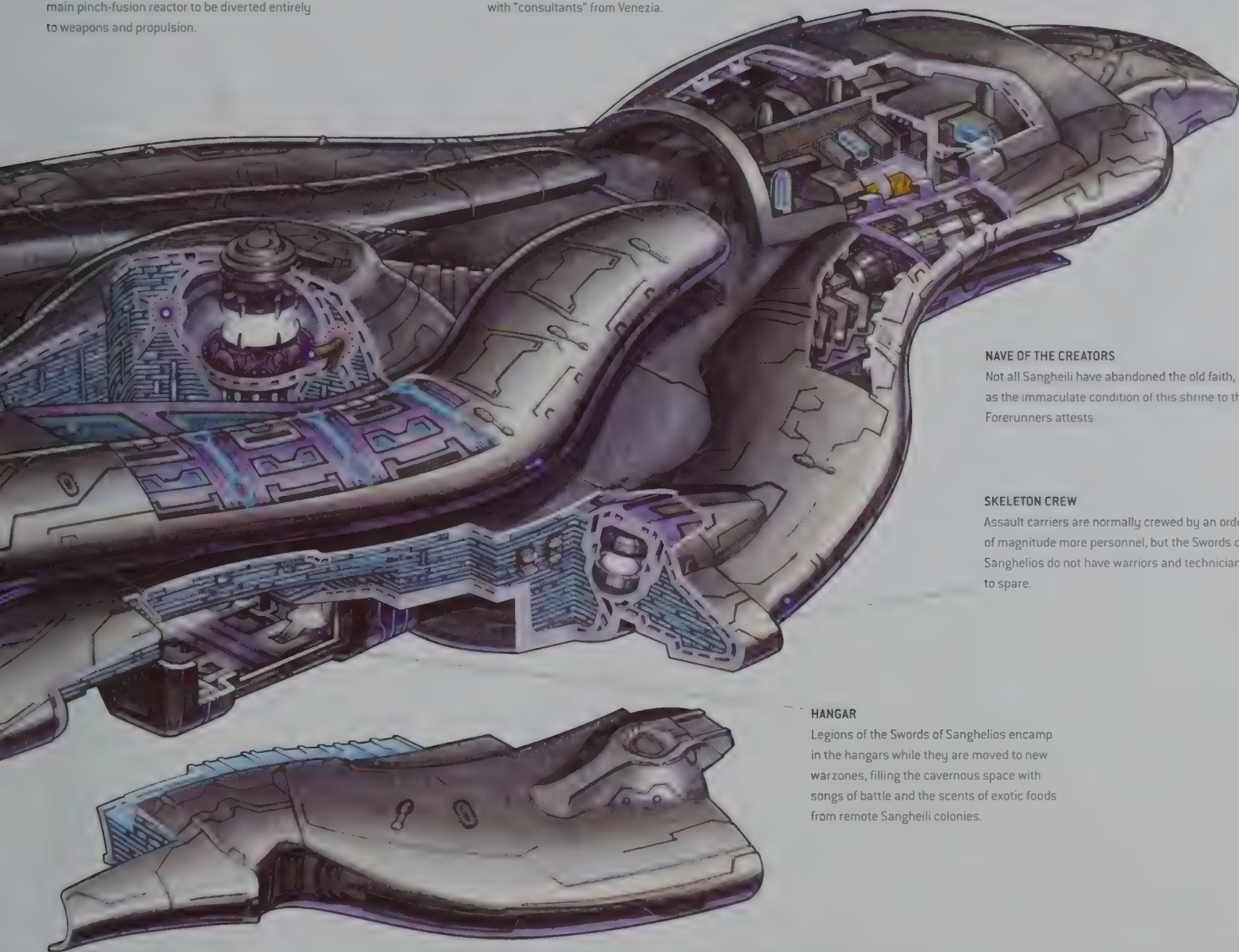
HEIGHT: 746 meters



LENGTH: 5,347 meters

OLD AND NEW

The smooth hull and distinctive rear cowlings marks the *Shadow of Intent* as a Kerel-pattern assault carrier, a rare Hierarchy-approved variant of the more common Syfon configuration.



NAVE OF THE CREATORS

Not all Sangheili have abandoned the old faith, as the immaculate condition of this shrine to the Forerunners attests.

SKELETON CREW

Assault carriers are normally crewed by an order of magnitude more personnel, but the Swords of Sanghelios do not have warriors and technicians to spare.

HANGAR

Legions of the Swords of Sanghelios encamp in the hangars while they are moved to new warzones, filling the cavernous space with songs of battle and the scents of exotic foods from remote Sangheili colonies.

WAR GRAVES

Many compartments in the *Shadow of Intent*'s outer hull are inaccessible due to battle damage. Ruined halls and collapsed chambers are filled with damage control foam and entombed corpses.

SCARRED BY WAR

With the destruction of High Charity and loss of Ministry records, very little is known of the operational history of the *Shadow of Intent*, though scars in its ancient frame tell of great battles won and trials overcome through the centuries. Blackened gashes caused by human nuclear weapons still dot the hull, with boiled armor and melted weapon batteries a grim reminder of plasma torpedo duels against San'Shyuum and Jiralhanae warships during and after the Great Schism. Full repairs must be deferred as long as the Covenant presses its attack on Sanghelios itself.

ATTACK SHIPS

Any Covenant military starship that does not warrant a shipmaster's chair and associated honors is classified as an attack ship. Their role is ambiguous among Sangheili commanders, as they are not considered true warships, nor do they demand consideration in the plans of a Supreme Commander. Most are commanded by Kig-Yar or Jiralhanae, who are usually less obsessed with the acquisition of glory and recognition of accomplishments in battles.

COVENANT LIGHT CRUISER CRS-CLASS (ZANAR PATTERN)

MANUFACTURER: Secondary Assembly Forges

ROLES: Investigation, security

CREW: 1 Superior; 8 Menials

TROOPS: None

LENGTH: 300 meters

MASS: 190,000 metric tons

ARMAMENT: 2x Erex-pattern plasma beam emitters; 6x Sintra-pattern plasma torpedo silos; 4x Pok-pattern beam lasers

The CRS-class is classified as a light cruiser by the UNSC, but has a role analogous to a UEG police cutter within the Covenant, patrolling inhabited star systems and intercepting civilian vessels to conduct routine inspections or enforce travel laws. Though some were used in the crusading fleets attacking humanity, most ensured that tithe ships reached their destinations or protected convoys of pilgrims passing to and from High Charity. It was from these rear-echelon fleets that Jul 'Mdama acquired light cruisers to augment his forces at Requiem.



▲ BANSHEE

Easy to manufacture, highly maneuverable, and heavily armed, the Banshee is a ubiquitous vehicle among the Covenant fleet. These swift craft accompany attack ships in planetary assaults to serve as both point defense and forward observers for plasma beams and torpedo strikes.

◀ BEAM LASERS

Two dedicated augur arrays allow each of the four Pok-pattern high energy lasers to target dozens of targets in quick succession. These are used to pick off targets of opportunity with minimal collateral damage during suppression operations on Covenant worlds.



HONOR AND GLORY

For San'Shyuum and Sangheili, honor is a "currency" acquired by accepting tangible rewards (honors, decorations, and offices) that increase their reputation and influence within the Covenant at large. Honor is not limited to individuals—institutions and even ships have their own inherent honor that reflects glory. For example, a warship's accumulated battle honors add prestige to the current shipmaster and crew.

WHISPERS

The control coils of CRS-class ships require careful tuning to avoid causing disorientation and hallucination among the crew when operating at full power.



MUTATION

The Zanar pattern is a stable mutation of the much larger Ket and Elefen pattern battlecruisers. Mutations of design patterns are rare, and with few exceptions they result in the ships being recycled, the design pattern deleted, and the assembly forge reset.

PLASMA TORPEDOES

Sintra-pattern plasma torpedoes are extremely swift but almost impossible to control in flight. They are best employed in a bombardment role.

ATAVISTIC EXPRESSION

In rare cases, sensor arrays on CRS-class light cruisers exhibit aberrant mutations during assembly that make them appear friendly to Forerunner god-machine defense protocols.

PHANTOM DROPSHIP

Supplies and fresh crews are often transported to attack ships using dropships.

TROOP CARRIERS

The Covenant's war hosts are extremely difficult to marshal and coordinate at large scales, despite the near-absolute power that the fleet's Supreme Commander can exercise over his forces. Troop carrier deployments are carefully planned both to minimize the potential for friendly fire during the chaotic opening stages of an invasion and to forcefully direct units who would otherwise work at the expense of larger objectives in their hunger for glory.

The smallest troop carriers are equivalent to human dropships, carrying combat detachments to and from the battlefield or transporting supplies needed to set up basecamps and forward staging zones. Tens of thousands of these craft were deployed against human worlds, and their distinctive silhouettes and auditory signature are burned into the minds of survivors and soldiers.

COVENANT TROOP CARRIER *SPIRIT (DEXTRO XUR PATTERN)*

MANUFACTURER: Tertiary Assembly Forges

ROLES: Transport

CREW: 2 Obedientaries; 30 Warriors

TROOPS: None

LENGTH: 30.5 meters

MASS: 69 metric tons

ARMAMENT: 1x Murién-pattern heavy plasma cannon

Well-armored and capable of operating in atmosphere and space with equal ease, the Spirit served as the Covenant's primary dropship and utility transport centuries before humanity encountered it on Harvest in 2525. At full capacity the Spirit carries a Covenant officer and his full retinue; a combat unit analogous to a human squad, but directly translated as "lance."

UNSC ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

Most Covenant troop carriers captured by human forces were disassembled or tested to destruction for insights into the aliens' technology and vulnerabilities, but a few were flown and reverse-engineered by ONI's threat modeling teams to build simulators for UNSC pilots.

GRAVITY HOIST

The gravity hoist can lift and lock-in either two small craft, or a single large vehicle. The Spirit features a uniquely stable contragravity system, which can adapt to a wide range of load profiles without any apparent compensation delays or loss of efficacy.



PILOTS

Many Sangheili dislike piloting dropships, preferring to leave this task to Unggoy and Kig-Yar instead.

◀ DROP BAYS

The Spirit can carry up to thirty Covenant infantry, split between the two troop bays positioned on either side. Apart from stasis harnesses that buffer the stress of evasive maneuvers and turbulence, there are no safety systems installed in the bays to protect passengers stationed within.

SENSORS

The Spirit's sensors and flight control system are intuitive and well-integrated, giving the pilot excellent situational awareness of anti-aerospace threats and environmental hazards.

COCKPIT

The Spirit's cockpit is a sensor operator station that provides command and control of the ship.



FIELD SHAPING VANES

All Covenant dropships use field-shaping to modify their aerodynamic profile, but this has little defensive application. Protective energy shields could be fitted, but there were few reasons to do so before the war against humanity.

► PLASMA CANNON

Below the pilot's cabin is the Spirit's solitary defensive weapon, a full-rotation plasma cannon turret. The cannon is an ancient design, and its fire control system speaks in command codes only barely intelligible to modern users. A simpler, manually controlled version of this cannon is used in some Shade turret patterns.



ARDENT PRAYER

The *Ardent Prayer* was one of many small Covenant warships that performed vital roles for their fleets, but possessed no battle honors of note and are rarely mentioned in High Charity's records. Mass-assembled during an earlier era of glorious exploration, the *Ardent Prayer* and its sister vessels traveled to distant stars, charted dangerous slipspace routes, and fought civilizations that resisted the light of the Prophets' truth; but such matters are considered beneath the attention of true warriors. After two Ages of dutiful service the vessel met its end while undertaking a holy mission to recover artifacts at a planet the humans called Reach.

SERAPH STRIKECRAFT

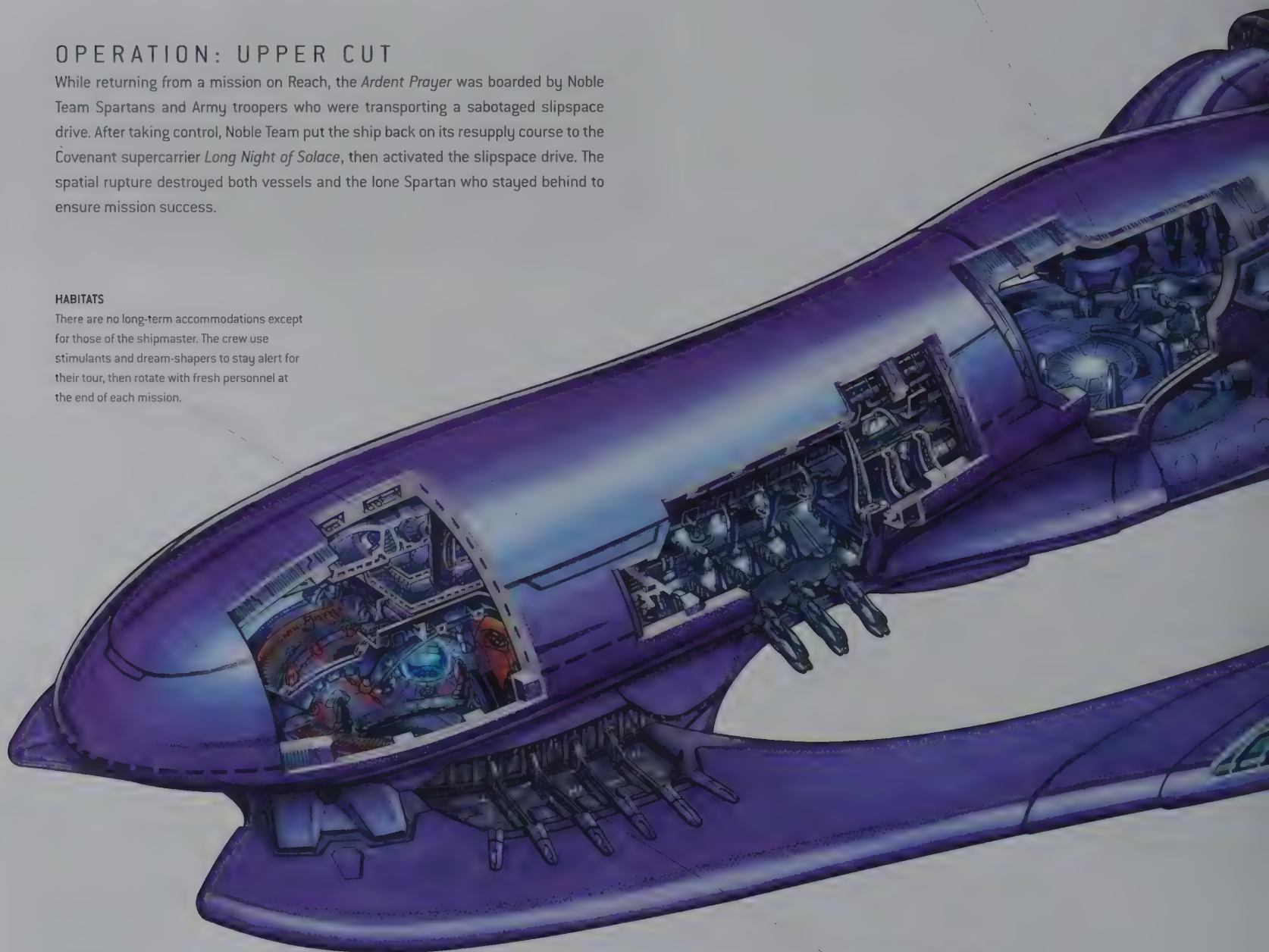
Every pilot aboard the *Ardent Prayer* was trained by famed Skymaster 'Dalamenee and carried a crystalline cartouche etched with his seven principles of the aerial hunt.

OPERATION: UPPER CUT

While returning from a mission on Reach, the *Ardent Prayer* was boarded by Noble Team Spartans and Army troopers who were transporting a sabotaged slipspace drive. After taking control, Noble Team put the ship back on its resupply course to the Covenant supercarrier *Long Night of Solace*, then activated the slipspace drive. The spatial rupture destroyed both vessels and the lone Spartan who stayed behind to ensure mission success.

HABITATS

There are no long-term accommodations except for those of the shipmaster. The crew use stimulants and dream-shapers to stay alert for their tour, then rotate with fresh personnel at the end of each mission.



THE FLEET OF VALIANT PRUDENCE

Ardent Prayer was but one ship in the Fleet of Valiant Prudence, a task force charged by the Ministry of Fervent Intercession with the recovery and research of Forerunner artifacts. The fleet forcefully secured holy Forerunner secrets from human survivors, Kig-Yar looters, and rival Covenant bureaucracies alike.

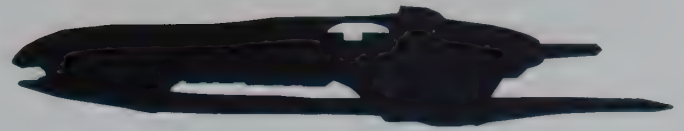
SHIPMASTER ARDO 'MORETUMEE

A leader of few words, shipmaster Ardo 'Moretumee climbed the ranks with a mix of martial prowess and tactical cunning. Though his family held considerable power in the Covenant High Council his personal ambitions were impossible to discern.

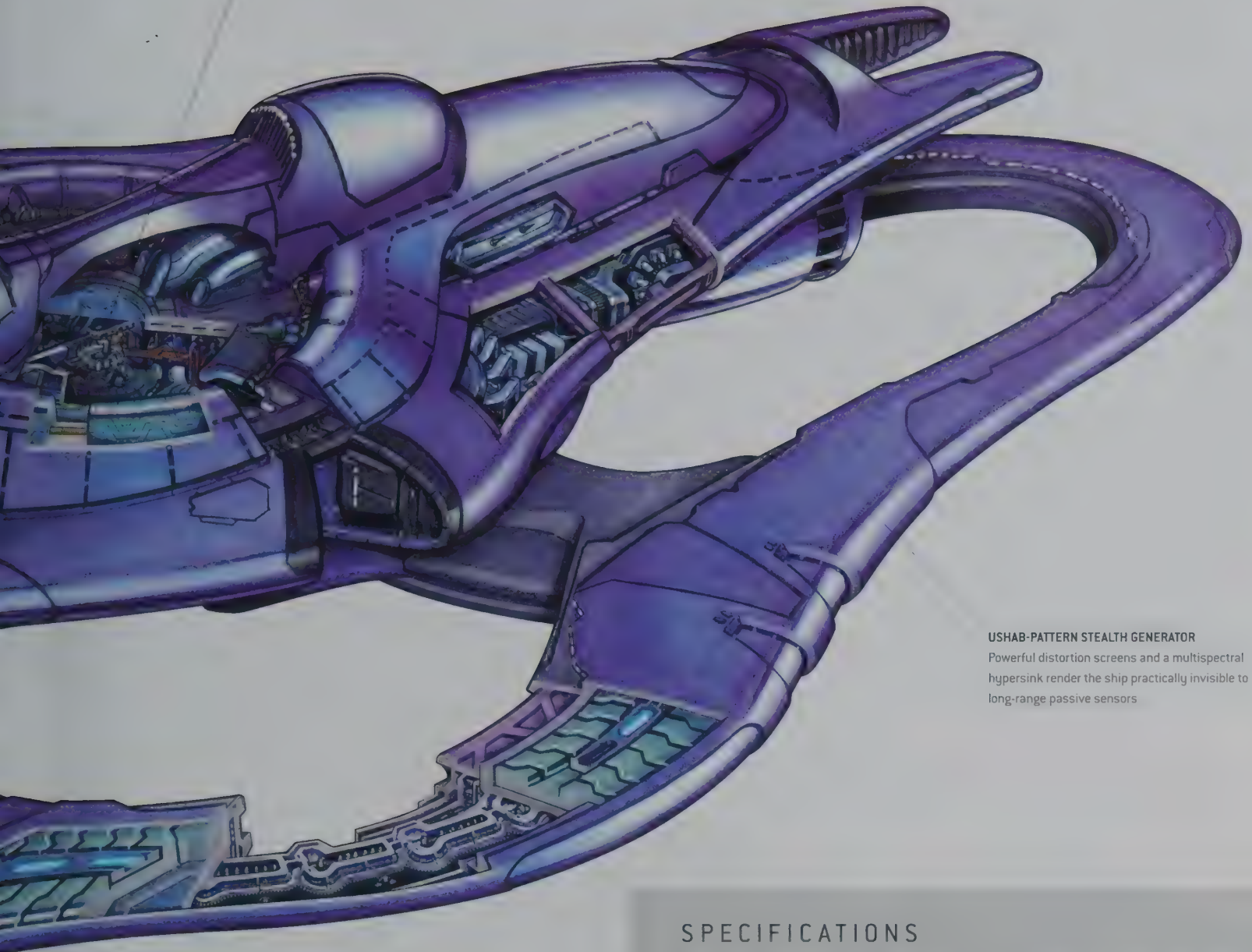
SDV-CLASS HEAVY CORVETTE

PROSELYTIZATION NETWORK RELAY
Long-range communication system for synchronizing orders and edicts.

HEIGHT: 175 meters



LENGTH: 956 meters



USHAB-PATTERN STEALTH GENERATOR
Powerful distortion screens and a multispectral hypersink render the ship practically invisible to long-range passive sensors

INSERTION POD LAUNCHER

Insertion pods launched from SDV-class vessels gain a temporary signature reduction when passing through the ship's distortion screen.

SPECIFICATIONS

Built during Twentieth Age of Discovery [c. 2070]; Destroyed during Ninth Age of Reclamation [August 14, 2552]

NAVAL ARCHITECTS: Master Shipwright Ckmu 'Raboree; Apprentice Hiveseeker Tek'ch

MANUFACTURER: Forgemasters of Tanus, Gorgon Assembly Vault

MASS: 8 million metric tons

MANEUVER DRIVE: 4x Callipoas-pattern repulsor engines

TRANSLIGHT ENGINE: Tyros-pattern borer (CODEN Series VI equivalent)

CREW: 16 Superiors; 2 Engineers; 20 Menials

TROOPS: 50 Obedientaries; 50 Warriors; 130 Thralls

ARMAMENT: 6x Melusean-pattern heavy plasma cannons; 16x Carnax Nu-pattern plasma bombardment mortars; 11x Phot-pattern pulse lasers

SHIELDING: Morelia-pattern dispersal field generators

COMPLEMENT: 8x Seraph strikecraft; 10x Banshee Fighter strikecraft; 8x Banshee flyers; 2x Spirit troop carriers; 104x insertion pods and deployment carapaces

VESTIGES

Not all Sangheili clans surrendered their military power to the San'Shyuum after the formation of the Covenant. Those who hoped to stage an eventual rebellion sent their fleets to drift in the space between stars or in caverns carved under airless worlds, then burned their memory and honors from all data archives. Forgotten by all but a few lineages of remembrancers, these vestiges are ancient instruments of power and destruction reclaimed by warring Sangheili factions following the Great Schism to bring glory to their shipmasters and spread carnage among the stars.

SANGHEILI FAST INTERDICTOR BLOCKADE RUNNER (HEKAR TAA PATTERN)

MANUFACTURER: Vassal Workshops of Clan Makan and Clan Vol

ROLES: Attack

CREW: 5 Superiors; 220 Menials

TROOPS: 15 Obedientaries; 100 Warriors; 500 Thralls

LENGTH: 2,020 meters

MASS: 80 million metric tons

ARMAMENT: 1x Pherex-pattern excavation beam; 3x Corven-pattern plasma beam emitters; 24x Gaff Naran-pattern plasma cannons; 16x Litrex-pattern plasma torpedo silos; 10x Eriu-pattern pulse lasers

Thought lost to time, Blockade Runners are warships dating back to the War of Beginnings. Many have been pulled from a grand fleet ossuary in the outer edge of the Joori system and reconditioned for war by Jul 'Mdama and Thel 'Vadam. These were part of a fleet that once belonged to Ophon 'Qaram, a legendary apostate and Supreme Commander who vanished from history after refusing to join the Covenant. Blockade Runners were his signature warship, used to quickly strike San'Shyuum fortifications and then vanish before retaliation could be directed their way.

FORM AND FUNCTION

Sangheili artisans and architects take much of their inspiration from nature, both in the structures they raise from the ground and the ships they take to the stars. The hull design of the Blockade Runner is based on the *arkan taa*, a carnivorous fish found in the northern waters of Sanghelios. Roughly the size of a Sangheili's fist, these creatures are feared and respected not for their size, but for their incredible attacking speed and fearlessness.

EYES IN THE DARK

The ancient hyperscanner panels of vestige warships are far superior to most human sensors, but Covenant warships can easily avoid their gaze.

WEAPON BATTERIES

The weapons of the Blockade Runner are antiquated, not ineffective. Though the older style of energy projectors lacks range and delicacy, they do not disappoint in raw power. The plasma cannons can also be overcharged to levels well beyond what the Covenant considered prudent; this can give the ship a tactical edge, but inexperienced crews run the risk of accidentally crippling the weapons with over-eager aggressiveness.

HANGAR

Every Blockade Runner was stocked with ancient patterns of Banshee and other craft when they entered storage. These were discarded or recycled when the ships were restored to active duty.



REPULSOR DRIVES

Modern Covenant repulsor drives are finely tuned and expected to operate for years between maintenance refreshes. The engines on the Blockade Runner are cruder instruments that require constant monitoring and adjustment to operate at full power.

LIFE SUPPORT

Vestiges are purely Sangheili warships: facilities for other species are clumsy retrofits. Even many Sangheili find shipboard conditions uncomfortable, as they are not accustomed to the scented air and droning subsonic hums that were standard features two millennia ago.

NEW INSPIRATION

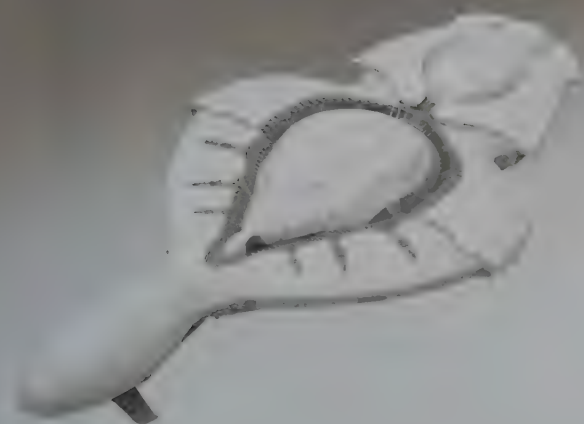
During their early interstellar period each Sangheili clan had a distinctive approach to starship engineering. A new generation of shipwrights now look to these vestiges both to learn their history and document engineering solutions which were lost, suppressed, or ignored by the Covenant.

BATTLEWORN

The vestiges are heirlooms of a time when the Sangheili were united in defense against the overwhelming power of the San'Shyuum's keyship. Now chaos reigns as brother turns against brother and the ancient warships are pulled from their hallowed resting places to burn what they were built to protect.

▼ LICH

Rarely seen outside Covenant space until after the Great Schism, the Lich and other deployment platforms were typically found in civilian and security roles, until demand for troop transports exceeded supply.



DRAGONS

At the height of their power the Forerunner navy was a peerless and unstoppable instrument of peace that both shielded and chastened species under the Mantle of Responsibility. Their warships wielded weapons of light and force, their presence announced by vast entourages of weapon-ships and combat Sentinels dancing in tactical patterns arranged by the greatest living and artificial minds in the Forerunner ecumene.

PRIME DRAGON *SOJOURNER DREADNOUGHT*

MANUFACTURER: Summus Assembler Vats

ROLES: Attack

CREW: 1 Princeps; 15 Navarchs

TROOPS: 200 Scutarii; 5,000 Venatores

LENGTH: 9,430 meters

MASS: 10 billion metric tons

ARMAMENT: 1x torsion driver; 28x converging beam cannons; 300x light mass fusillade cannons

Last in a line of first-order warships stretching back to the Forerunners' earliest interstellar expansion, the Sojourner was introduced shortly before containment efforts against the Flood began, and fought in all major engagements of the war that followed. It was the pinnacle of Forerunner naval technology: impossibly fast, heavily armed, and highly efficient. The dragons led strikes deep into the Flood-dominated wastelands known as the Burn to ruthlessly cauterize even the slightest hint of infection; an ultimately futile effort.



▲ DRAGON FORMATIONS

Two dragons and a battle station formed combat tridents, independent squadrons that could be deployed anywhere in the galaxy to police unruly pocket empires and separate, bickering Forerunner factions. As desperation grew and the Forerunners' protected boundaries shrunk during the Flood War, a new combat formation arose: ten dragons and a battle station arranged into deadly decimation lattices.

THE HUNTERS

Forerunner ships require only a handful of living beings to oversee operations. On warships the crew were specialists known as navarchs, led by the ship's princep. They were protected by heavily armored Warrior-Servant scutarii who excelled in shipboard combat and tactical reconfiguration of the ship's interior spaces, while the war sphinx-clad venatores directed the ship's millions of autonomous hunter-killers on long-range strikes.

◀ CONVERGING BEAM CANNONS

Forerunner warships wield tendrils of energy that seek out enemy vessels and provide a path for follow-on antimatter streams that consume everything they touch. The Warrior-Servants who controlled these weapons were artists in their application, weaving tapestries of death that sought out even the smallest weakness in Flood defenses.



TORSION DRIVER

The primary weapon of the Sojourner is a capital-scale torsion driver, a gravitic emitter that can be used as a delicate grasping tool or crude scalpel. In battle it pushes and pulls portions of the enemy ships beyond the limits of their shielding and structural supports with discordant harmonies, ripping them apart and exposing vulnerable systems to concentrated fire by the dreadnought's other weapons

KILLING BLADES

Millions of Sojourners were raised up and thrown against the Flood, but in the end only a handful remained intact to see Halo fire. Those still undergoing assembly at hidden harbors around the galaxy grew tall and ready for deployment, but remain silent and empty without Warrior-Servants or ancilla to light their darkened cores.

AUSPEX ARRAY

Dragoons are fitted with long-range scanning systems that peer through slipspace to look for approaching ships, or probe vast distances in realspace to instantly map local star systems. They are able to detect the subtle changes in planetary or ship atmospheres which indicate the presence of Flood contamination.

WARRIOR-SERVANTS

The Forerunners mastered and endlessly refined many arts, and their military caste, the stoic Warrior-Servants, were unsurpassed in the art of war. Warrior-Servants crewed mighty dragoons and other dreadnoughts while clad in ornate combat skins and mighty war sphinxes, burning Flood-infested ships from spore-choked skies and lancing corrupted starships before they could spread their plagued cargo. They fought bravely and with unmatched strategic genius, but the Gravemind had their measure. Only when the cleansing energies of Halo washed over the galaxy did the last of the Forerunners' defenders know victory over the parasite, then death.

WEAPON-SHIPS

The Forerunners used a variety of autonomous drone craft to carry out combat tasks considered beneath the dignity and worth of living Warrior-Servants. The most common were weapon-ships, small auxiliaries deployed in the millions to serve as scouts, escorts, and shields. All of them were disposable pawns of the fleet commanders, and major Forerunner battle sites are invariably littered with vast clouds of their wreckage.

TERTIARY WEAPON-SHIP

PHAETON

MANUFACTURER: Minoris Assembler Vats

ROLES: Ground attack; infantry support

CREW: 1 pilot

LENGTH: 10.3 meters

MASS: 8 metric tons

ARMAMENT: 2x light mass cannons; 2x pulse missile launchers

The Phaeton is a weapon-ship employed during combat operations on planetary surfaces. Via AI control, a single Forerunner warrior could command tens of thousands of these craft during containment operations. Millions were organized into single-purpose tactical phalanxes to cut into the heart of Flood hives, incinerate cities converted into monstrous mountains of corrupted biomass, or—as was often the case—sacrifice themselves to cover fighting retreats. Though not intended for the role, Phaetons were also deployed to serve with orbiting quarantine fleets, supplementing fighters and harriers by acting as point defense against incoming waves of Flood boarding pods and hijacked civilian ships.



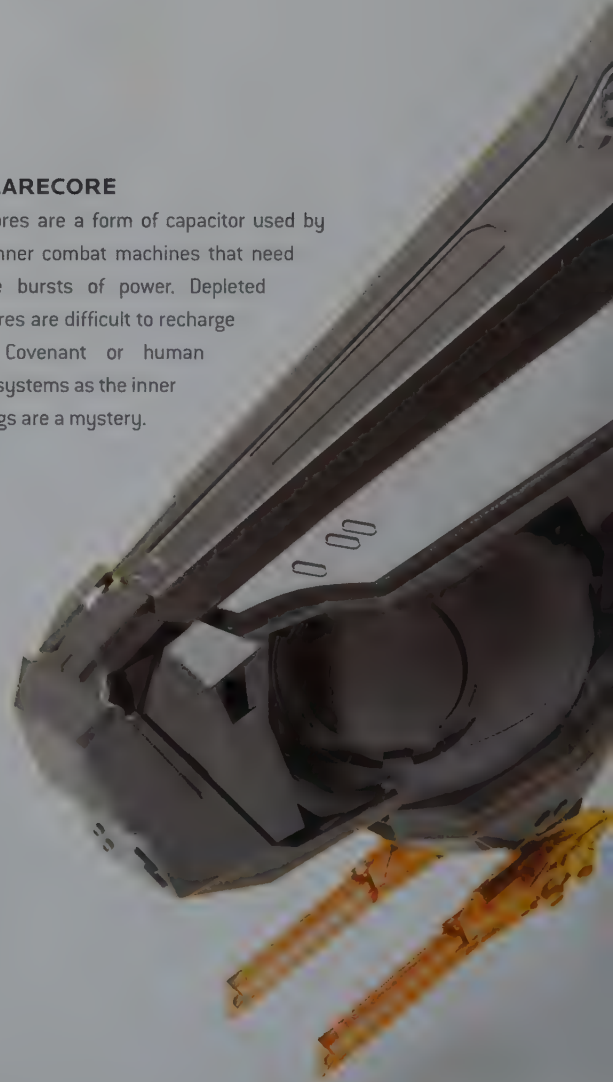
PILOT'S COCOON

Access to the pilot's compartment is via a short-range translocation shunt initiated from an access panel to the rear of the flarecore. This brief journey is fatal to most living creatures not clad in a combat skin or power armor.



◀ FLARECORE

Flarecores are a form of capacitor used by Forerunner combat machines that need intense bursts of power. Depleted flarecores are difficult to recharge using Covenant or human power systems as the inner workings are a mystery.



◀ ENGINE PODS

The engine pods of the Phaeton house contragravity generators and the equipment needed to conduct short-range translocation jumps. The Phaeton can also access translocation grids found on Forerunner planets and installations, allowing it to make long-range teleports.

MUTABLE PATTERN

Many specialized Phaeton weapon-ships exist. For example, the offensive Helios pattern is armed with a cleansing beam and rapid-fire pulse missile pods, while the defensive Eos pattern has a constructor beam and can launch shield generator pylons.

TACTICAL EXPEDIENCY

By Forerunner standards the Phaeton was cheap and utterly disposable. Yet by the end of their empire even these simple vehicles could no longer be mass produced without sacrificing other strategic options.

MONITORS

Ancilla and Composed minds who manage and maintain Phaetons stored within Forerunner facilities.

WEAPON LOADOUT

The Phaeton's most widespread pattern is armed with a twin-linked burst cannon and two pulse missile launchers

SMARTMATTER

The structure of many Forerunner machines is composed of self-assembling micro-machine blocks reinforced by energy bonds. Combat damage causes these bonds to fail and the machine-cells to lose cohesion, until the entire assembly disintegrates into fine dust and hard-light embers.

ANODYNE SPIRIT

The *Anodyne Spirit* is one of the mighty Forerunner keyships—a massive repository of genetic possibility and a life-giving factory used to reseed the galaxy with sentient species after the Halo superweapons fired. Built in the twilight of Forerunner civilization to carry out the last-ditch Conservation Measure, the *Spirit's* fearless crew ranged deep into Flood-corrupted territory to locate planets untouched by the parasite and index a cross-section of their biodiversity before it could be consumed. The *Anodyne Spirit* and her sister ships saved countless species before retiring to the Ark for storage, securing the Forerunner legacy as faithful keepers of the Mantle of Responsibility. There it remained for centuries, until its theft and repurposing began a chain of events that led to both the creation of the Covenant and their genocidal campaign against humanity.

SPECIFICATIONS

Built during the Forerunner-Flood War [c. 100,040 BCE]

NAVAL ARCHITECTS: Grasping-Steady-Firmament; Lightning-Weaving-Helix

MANUFACTURER: Ingens Assembler Vats

MASS: 19 billion metric tons

MANEUVER DRIVE: Torsion plates

TRANSLIGHT ENGINE: Crystal-mediated slipspace core (No human equivalent)

CREW: 1 Prince; 3 Navarchs; 1 Archmedicus; 560 Adjutants

TROOPS: 100 Scutarii

ARMAMENT: 1x light mass fusillade array, 3x anti-ship artillery systems

SHIELDING: Prime dispersal field generator

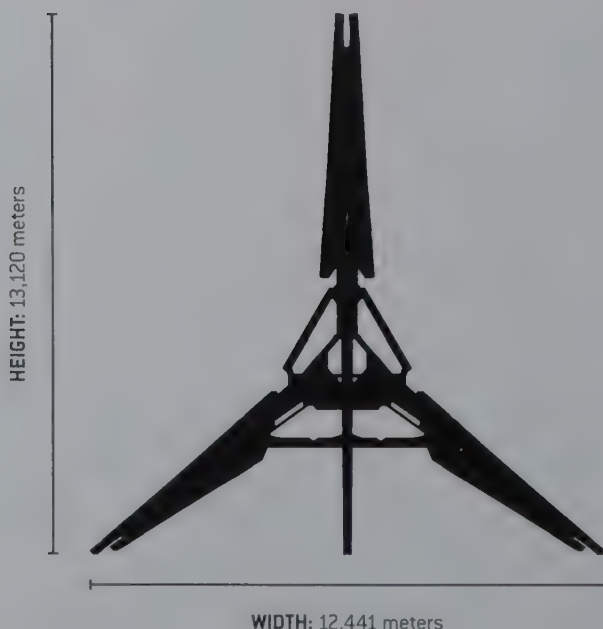
COMPLEMENT: 1,224x Strato-Sentinels; 48x Strix-class harriers; 890,000x Sentinels and weapon-ships



LIVING HELIX

The crew had little time to appreciate the communal areas and workspaces made available to them.

FORERUNNER KEYSHIP

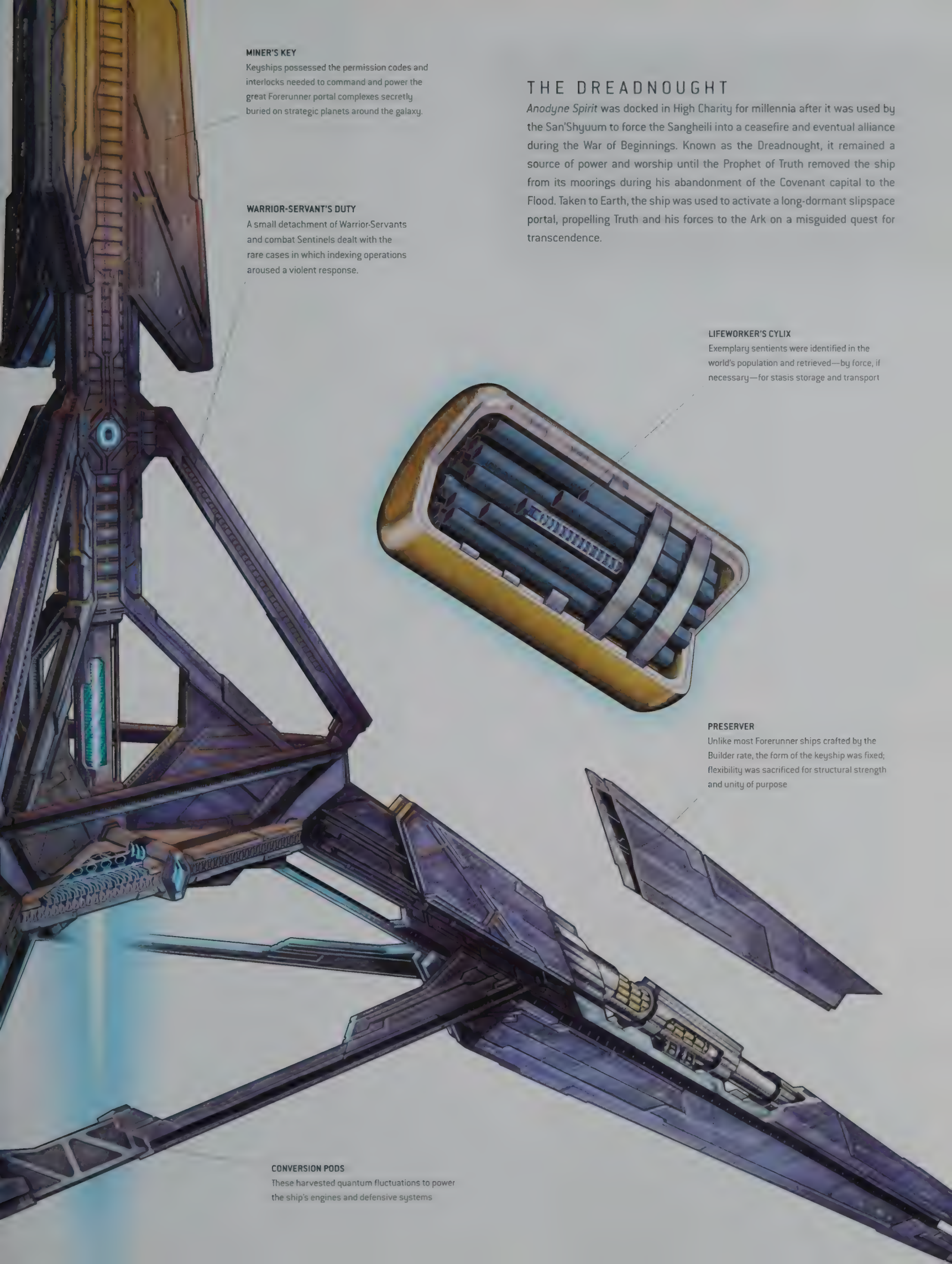


RENEGADE MIND

Anodyne Spirit was stolen from the Ark by Mendicant Bias, a rogue Forerunner metarch seeking redemption for its unforgivable crimes against the Mantle. Unfortunately, the escaping keyship crashed on Janjur Qom, homeworld of the San'Shyuum.

BUILDER'S RECORD

Upon reaching their target world, the crew of the keyship initiated a detailed ecological cataloging and sample collection process to create a store of living and digitized genetic potential.



MINER'S KEY

Keyships possessed the permission codes and interlocks needed to command and power the great Forerunner portal complexes secretly buried on strategic planets around the galaxy.

WARRIOR-SERVANT'S DUTY

A small detachment of Warrior-Servants and combat Sentinels dealt with the rare cases in which indexing operations aroused a violent response.

THE DREADNOUGHT

Anodyne Spirit was docked in High Charity for millennia after it was used by the San'Shyuum to force the Sangheili into a ceasefire and eventual alliance during the War of Beginnings. Known as the Dreadnought, it remained a source of power and worship until the Prophet of Truth removed the ship from its moorings during his abandonment of the Covenant capital to the Flood. Taken to Earth, the ship was used to activate a long-dormant slipspace portal, propelling Truth and his forces to the Ark on a misguided quest for transcendence.

LIFEWORKER'S CYLIX

Exemplary sentients were identified in the world's population and retrieved—by force, if necessary—for stasis storage and transport

PRESERVER

Unlike most Forerunner ships crafted by the Builder race, the form of the keyship was fixed; flexibility was sacrificed for structural strength and unity of purpose

CONVERSION PODS

These harvested quantum fluctuations to power the ship's engines and defensive systems

BATTLE STATIONS

Forerunner battle stations are mobile fortresses that range in size from kilometer-long Aspis platforms to moon-sized Castellans. Battle stations never operate alone, and always serve as apex control for millions of weapon-ships, Sentinels, monitors, war sphinxes, harriers, and other strategic fleet assets. Their value during the Flood War was immense, second only to the Arks and the great weapon-rings that they had constructed.

PROMETHEAN COMMAND SHIP MANTLE'S APPROACH

MANUFACTURER: Master Builder's Fabricae

ROLES: Domination

CREW: 1 Strategos; 25 Princes; 800 Navarchs

TROOPS: 250,000 Praetorians; 5.5 million Venatores

HEIGHT: 371.4 kilometers

MASS: 4.7 quadrillion metric tons

ARMAMENT: 1x heavy ion weapon system; 1x stasis tension driver; 40x torsion driver arrays; 1,700x light mass fusillade cannons; 25,000x converging beam cannons

Mantle's Approach is the Didact's personal ship of war; a flagship from which he directed Promethean forces against the Flood, and the instrument of vengeance from which he led his campaign against humanity upon release from his imprisonment on Requiem. Though much of the vessel was destroyed by the actions of the Master Chief, self-preservation protocols shunted the core of *Mantle's Approach* to the nearest repair facility on record—a world known as Genesis.



▲ HALL OF COMMAND

Forerunner vessels rarely feature easily identifiable control centers, and their ships routinely operate semi-autonomously under ancilla control. Nevertheless, it occasionally proved convenient to gather key personnel for protection, monitoring, and camaraderie. The Didact directed his forces from a specialized command cluster within the *Mantle's Approach* known as the Hall of Command.

HEROES' WALK

The Didact's hopeless crusade against the Flood demanded not only the bodies and minds of his loyal Warrior-Servants, but their identity and history as well. After their composition into Knights, the barracks, training grounds, museums, and halls of honor that served flesh-and-blood Prometheans were no longer necessary or useful for their reborn construct bodies and dulled personalities.

THE COMPOSER

The Composer is a Forerunner neural physics device used to break down living creatures and convert their mind-state into a digital essence through a painful, destructive process charitably called sublimation. The essence can then be transferred into machine storage for safekeeping or interrogation. The Didact used a Composer to make his Promethean warriors immune to the Flood by transferring their Composed essences to Knight construct bodies. —

◀ STASIS TENSION DRIVER

A product of the Didact's genius in war, the stasis tension driver is an array of three projectors that pairs quantum singularity generators with repurposed torsion drivers. Together they generate localized space-time distortions that impede formation of slipspace ruptures and jam all supraluminal communications and sensors.



CORE SEED

Mantle's Approach can renew itself if the central core of the ship survives, provided it has access to raw materials of sufficient quality.

RECONCILIATION DEBT

All faster-than-light movement and communication creates a dangerous "reconciliation debt" of causality violations both in the ship and surrounding space-time. The resulting hyperspatial strain interferes with slipspace travel and supraluminal communication over a wide area until the effect dissipates. Even elaborate and draconian traffic management never fully mitigated the corrosive effects of abusing slipspace at the scale demanded by the Forerunners, which restricted their military options and fleet mobility during the critical early years of the Flood outbreak.

VARIABLE GEOMETRY HULL

The unique design seed of *Mantle's Approach* was modified and approved by none other than the Master Builder, greatest of the Forerunner engineers and architects. Built of programmable matter, solidified light, and energy interlocks, the ship can reshape itself to defeat the ever-changing tactics of virulent parasite and cunning human alike.

EXALTED SEPULCHER

After it was remodeled to service composed Prometheans, the *Mantle's Approach* could build and hold over a billion Knight shells, but there were never enough essences available to fill the empty vessels. Vast numbers of these inert war frames survived in their maintenance cradles when remnants of the *Mantle's Approach* arrived at Genesis.



▲ HEAVY ION WEAPON SYSTEM

Adapted from emplacements used on planet-cracking siege platforms, the main cannon of *Mantle's Approach* fires a bolt of exotic matter accelerated to a significant fraction of the speed of light. The entire ship must reconfigure itself after firing, but each shot has the power to buckle continental plates and utterly disintegrate even phase-rotated fortifications.

PEACEMAKERS

Peacemakers are powerful constructs used to enforce the Forerunners' vision of the Mantle of Responsibility on the galaxy. The greatest of these tools, Arcani and Intercissors, patrolled the ecumene itself, correcting disruptions that resulted from internal schisms and neglect, while Guardians and Preceptors monitored and fenced off the activity of lesser species within pocket empires. Through their connections to the Domain's overwatch network the Guardians reflexively countered many threats to the ecumene long before they rose to the attention of Warrior-Servant commanders, though the Flood outbreak proved even their vigilance had its limits.

TIER TWO PEACEMAKER *GUARDIAN CUSTODE*

MANUFACTURER: Minoris Assembler Vats

ROLES: Security; protection; enforcement

CREW: None

LENGTH: 1,413 meters

MASS: 200 million metric tons

ARMAMENT: 1x disruption generator; 2x attenuation pulse emitters; 6x converging beam cannons

While the Ecumene Council wielded them as instruments of control, their distant ancestors created the Custodes as tenders and recorders of the Precursor's legacy, though this long ago passed out of living memory. As well as being efficient protectors and enforcers, the Custodes were also immaculate record keepers, adding the struggles and triumphs of those under their protection to the Domain's depthless archives. Sometimes, they would also take independent action to serve a greater purpose when the Domain resonated with these events.



CONVERGING BEAM CANNONS

Six converging beam cannon emitters were more than adequate to defeat fleets of primitive capital ships, but were of little use when facing Forerunner warships infested and controlled by the Flood.

DOMAIN LINKS

Guardians were closely attuned to the ecumene's legal authorities, and the Domain ensured they were often at-hand to assist or monitor their activities.

MANTLE'S HOST

Guardians had the authority to plant assembler seeds on the worlds they protected, which would eventually grow and expand to staging areas and factories for lesser Sentinel and weapon-ship deputies.

◀ DUTIFUL MINDS

The Custode's appearance unnerved most Forerunners, though all attempts to change their visage were unsuccessful. The ancilla who inhabited Guardians also grew strange and cold, with limited personality and empathy. Service as a Guardian and deep synchronization with the Domain reshaped their artificial minds into a form best suited to serve the Mantle of Responsibility and enforce prime directives laid down when the Forerunners were still young.



VARIABLE BODY

The ever-changing body of the Custodee reshapes itself to awe, inspire, and maximize effectiveness of all defensive systems.

▲ FOCUS WINGS

The "wings" of a Custodee contain energy condensers which draw power from the surrounding quantum vacuum. They also contain effectors which magnify the Guardian's attenuation pulse—a multi-vector electronic warfare attack that can disable even Forerunner systems.

THE MANTLE OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Mantle of Responsibility was the predominant philosophical system adhered to by the Forerunners, guiding and informing their governance of the galaxy, based on the belief that the most developed species was charged with the stewardship of all life. The tenets of the Mantle, however, allowed for competition and conflict if it did not threaten galactic biodiversity. The Forerunners gradually came to believe this meant they alone should have the capability to conduct interstellar war, and used the Peacemakers to forestall any potential threats to their military and technological supremacy.

GLOSSARY

AGES: Important periods of Covenant history identified by key themes of Abandonment, Conflict, Conversion, Discovery, Doubt, Reconciliation, or Reclamation. The war with humanity signaled the end of the 23rd Age of Doubt and the start of the 9th Age of Reclamation.

ANCILLA: High-order Forerunner intelligence, created by evolving and improving lesser versions over countless generations. These smart AIs can be arranged into combined minds, known as metarchs, or operate independently.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI): Highly sophisticated software construct that displays many of the behavioral and functional characteristics associated with biological, thinking life. Most AIs are “dumb,” and not self-aware or capable of creativity. “Smart” AIs have the capacity for wisdom, perceive and process real world information, and can take independent action.

ARK: Forerunner factory and archive that constructed the Halo Array and housed samples preserved as part of the Conservation Measure. It is located outside the galaxy, beyond the reach of Halo's activation.

ARMIGER: Forerunner combat Sentinels used in planetary operations. The spread of the logic plague and corruption of armiger forces was a major blow to Warrior-Servant military effectiveness.

ARTISAN-ARMORERS: Covenant technicians, designers, and forgemasters who operate the assembly forges and maintain design patterns.

ASSEMBLERS: Forerunner nanofabrication facilities. They range in size and complexity from small machines used for personal items, to moon-sized foundries that can forge Shield Worlds and battle stations.

ASSEMBLY FORGES: Covenant manufacturing facilities that build items piece-by-piece using clouds of programmable nanomachines. As imperfect recreations of Forerunner assembler vats, assembly forges are susceptible to mutations in design patterns, variance in feedstock material, and transcription errors. The greatest and most capable assembly forges were installed in High Charity.

ASSOCIATED INTELLIGENCE: Dumb AI constructs used by the Covenant in limited applications. Contact with logic plague code-strings and other issues led to the Prophets banning most AI research, but captured human AIs and feral ancilla were carefully studied.

BATTLENET: Distributed battle management and communication network. Forms the core of Covenant and UNSC decision support systems, which route intel and orders to military units on combat operations.

BUILDER: Forerunner race that designed and constructed machinery and artificial minds. The Builders were organized into guilds who competed for prestige, innovative designers, and resource worlds.

CAPTAIN: The commander of a human ship, regardless of actual rank.

CLEANSING: Covenant term for major compliance operations.

CLENCH: Forerunner strategy that utilized slipspace travel, nonlinear causality, and probability manipulation to conduct interstellar combat operations.

CHIRURGEONS: San/Shyuum biomedical specialists in the Ministry of Preparation dedicated to the study of Lifeworker secrets once locked in the Forerunner Dreadnought.

CODEN: W. Fujikawa's cryptic name for the physics package at the core of the first human slipspace drive. Later used to refer to field generators of any SFTE, with major improvements denoted by a series number.

COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION AUTHORITY (CAA): The administrative body for humanity's colonies, established in 2310. It remains a division of the UEG, though its influence has become marginal.

COLONIAL MILITARY ADMINISTRATION (CMA): The military and policing arm of the CAA. It was reorganized and absorbed into the UNSC in 2497, after a series of scandals.

COMBAT SKIN: Forerunner battle armor and environmental suits worn under specialized carapaces. Each race had its own configurations and style of combat skin.

COMPOSER: Forerunner neural-physics device for transforming biological minds into digital essences.

CONSERVATION MEASURE: A radical plan by the Forerunners that mitigated both the Flood's destruction and the genocidal effect of Halo by preserving, indexing, and reseeded sentient life in the galaxy.

CONVERSION POD: A type of Forerunner energy-harvesting system that exploits quantum fluctuations in

surrounding space-time. Captured primordial black holes and muon-catalyzed fusion cores were often paired with conversion pods for specialized applications.

CORE WORLDS: General term for habitable planets that can comfortably support large populations and have well-developed infrastructures. Also known as garden worlds.

COVENANT: A theocratic dictatorship, unified in the belief that the Forerunners built the Halo Array to transcend the mundane world and enter a higher plane of existence. The Covenant's search for the Sacred Rings and path to salvation was known as the Great Journey.

COVENANT WAR: Human name for the genocidal conflict with the Covenant that started with the attack on Harvest in 2525 and ended with the Prophet of Truth's death on the Ark in 2552.

CRYOTUBE: Cryogenic stasis unit. Used on interstellar voyages to endure protracted travel times and to preserve medical patients. Long-term suspension can result in neurological and tissue damage.

CYBERLINK: Machine-control connection made possible with direct neural interfaces and embedded expert system mediators.

DESIGN PATTERN: Instructions fed to nanomachines that construct Covenant machinery. Many patterns were based on analysis and replication of Forerunner devices, but improving or substantially altering the work of the gods was heavily restricted and monitored by the Prophets.

DESIGN SEED: Construction templates for Forerunner machinery, fed to assemblers for mass replication.

DIDACT: Legendary Forerunner military commander and leader of the Prometheans. His true name was Shadow-of-Sundered-Star.

DISRUPTOR: Forerunner cyberwarfare weapon system that uses charged particle beams and nanomachine infiltrators to degrade and destroy enemy control systems.

DOMAIN: Self-aware Precursor knowledge network used by the Forerunners to document, transmit, and interpret all information and personal memory in their galaxy-spanning realm. It was the soul and record of the Forerunners, the sum of all they knew and had experienced.

DRAGOON: First-order Forerunner capital ship used for initiating long-range strikes and raiding.

DREADNOUGHT: Covenant name for the *Anodyne Spirit* keyship, the most powerful combat vessel in the Orion Arm until the Didact awakened *Mantle's Approach*. Not to be confused with the general class of warships called dreadnoughts.

DROP POD: Small reentry vehicle used to transport combat troops from orbit to the surface. The Covenant equivalent is known as an insertion pod.

DROPSHIP: Transatmospheric vehicle deployed to deliver cargo and personnel to and from orbit.

ECUMENE: The worlds and realms of the Milky Way galaxy occupied and controlled by the Forerunners. Major administrative regions within the ecumene were known as themas.

ECUMENE COUNCIL: Prime governing body of the Forerunners. Comprised of at least five hundred representatives from the various Forerunner races and territories.

ENERGY PROJECTOR: Covenant directed energy weapon that uses gravitic impellers and magnetic lensing to accelerate, focus, and direct beams of high-intensity plasma generated by the ship's pinch-fusion reactors. The most powerful energy projectors form tight-beam lances for excavation and cutting, while lesser mechanisms emit streams of plasma which are bent towards targets using invisible magnetic fields.

ENERGY SHIELDING: Network of generators that creates overlapping fields of invisible force that reflect, dissipate, or absorb attacks. Unless generators are damaged or destroyed, the force-field will regenerate.

ESSENCE: Low-resolution digital archive of a thinking mind. Each Forerunner's personal ancilla attempted to collect this at the moment of death for storage in the Domain. The Composer and similar devices could also create essences of varying quality and stability.

EXPERT SYSTEM: General term for autonomous decision-making programs.

FLOOD: Voracious, hive-mind parasites capable of seizing, converting, and controlling sentient hosts in an effort to perpetuate its kind. The memories of infected individuals are exploited to further the infestation.

FLOOD WAR: The containment and sterilization operations undertaken by the Forerunners to slow the Flood's spread. The conflict ultimately engulfed the entire galaxy and ended with near-total elimination of the Forerunners. The Flood was stopped only with the firing of Halo.

FORERUNNER RATES: Physiological modifications and psychological peculiarities that defined the different Forerunner occupational and social groupings. Advancement in a rate was coupled with induced mutations and neurotherapy. Changing rates was difficult, but not unheard of.

FUSION DRIVE: Human maneuver drive that uses a fusion reactor to superheat reaction mass (often water or hydrogen) and expels it at high velocities. High-thrust versions utilize small quantities of antimatter.

GAUSS CANNON: Semi-portable and vehicle-mounted electromagnetic launchers. They typically fire hypervelocity armor-piercing projectiles.

GENESIS: Forerunner hubworld crafted to study and explore deep levels of the Domain. During the Flood War it was repurposed to serve as a strategic center.

GLASSING: Covenant close-orbit and near-surface bombardment of military and urban sites with massed energy projectors. The heat from the bombardment is so great that nearly all objects at the impact point melt away and the underlying soil is vitrified, creating thick layers of glass-like slag. For this reason, the areas of a planet burned by this bombardment are referred to as glasslands.

GRAVEMIND: Composite mind that controls and directs the Flood. Its local influence increases as the Flood grow in number and create specialized forms through which it can manifest its malign intelligence.

GRAVITICS: The science and technology of generating and manipulating gravity. Common applications include generators to provide lift in planetary gravity wells, lenses that precisely focus energy, and presses which manufacture highly compressed forms of matter.

GREAT JOURNEY: The Covenant's march to glorious salvation and transcendence in what they believed were cleansing energies created by the Holy Rings.

GREAT SCHISM: Covenant civil war triggered when the High Prophet of Truth attempted to remove the Sangheili from the alliance. The Great Schism and subsequent loss of High Charity to Flood infection marked the end of the Covenant as a major power in the Orion Arm.

HALO ARRAY: Seven ringworld neural-disruption weapon installations that, when fired in sequence to allow resonation of energy pulses, kill all sentient life in the galaxy. Built and controlled at the Ark, the Array was fired a hundred millennia ago to stop the Flood, though some species were saved as part of the Conservation Measure.

HARRIER: Third-order Forerunner capital ship used for interception and containment.

HIGH PROPHETS: The three highest-ranking San'Shyuum who led the Covenant. The High Prophets of Truth, Mercy, and Regret formed the ruling triumvirate during the Covenant War.

HUMAN SPHERE: General term for the worlds and holdings in the Orion Arm controlled by humanity. The UEG and UNSC are the most powerful groups within this sphere.

HURAGOK (ENGINEERS): Forerunner biomechanical servant-tools with an innate ability to construct, repair, maintain, and augment advanced technology. From clockwork to nanotech, there is no known machinery they cannot intuitively understand and improve upon.

INNER COLONIES: Habitable worlds located along low-energy slipspace routes centered on Earth. These worlds were intensively surveyed and developed in the first decades of the Domus Diaspora.

INSURRECTION: Broad term for rebels and malcontents who oppose Earth's control of the colonies.

JIRALHANA (BRUTES): Pseudo-ursine species that joined the Covenant shortly before the war with humanity. Their natural aggressiveness and strongly hierarchical society made them well-suited for use as shock infantry by the Covenant, and useful pawns of the High Prophet of Truth.

KEYSHIPS: Forerunner transports commissioned by the Librarian to index and catalog what sentient life remained in the galaxy during the final years of the Flood War.

KIG-YAR (JACKALS): Three closely related sub-species who serve in skirmisher and marksman roles within the Covenant. Most Kig-Yar ceded none of their culture to the Prophets, and saw the Great Journey more as a temporary business arrangement than any sort of spiritual campaign.

KNIGHT: Promethean armiger controlled by the composed essence of a human or Forerunner warrior.

KNOWLEDGE ENGINE: Neural physics-based decision-creation intelligence used by the Precursors. Analogous to ancilla.

LASER: Powerful and tightly focused light emitted in nanosecond pulses. Covenant lasers are far more powerful than those used by the UNSC due to their superior power storage systems and gravitic-lensing focal arrays.

LEKGOLO (HUNTERS): Assimilated intelligences composed of eel-like organisms clustered together in colonies. Colonies can reshape themselves into various forms for travel and combat.

LIBRARIAN: Forerunner Lifeshaper; greatest of the Lifeworkers, wife of the Didact, and architect of the Conservation Measure. Her true name was First-Light-Weaves-Living-Song.

LIFEWORKER: Forerunner rate focused on the care and preservation of living things. Few were practiced in the art of creating life, preferring instead to adjust and reconfigure. Their highest rank was Lifeshaper.

LOGIC PLAGUE: Viral code strings and insidious idea patterns which exploit the sensing-learning loop of Forerunner ancilla, causing them to either malfunction or transfer their allegiance to the Flood.

LUMINARY: Covenant devices used to detect possible Forerunner relics. All are modeled after an arcane mechanism found aboard the Dreadnought. Its original purpose is unknown.

MAETHRILLIAN (CAPITAL): Massive world-station at the center of Forerunner politics. The ruling Ecumene Council was based here until it was attacked and overrun by the Flood. The loss of Maethrillian marked the effective end of the Forerunners as a galactic society.

MAGNETIC ACCELERATOR CANNON (MAC): Large electromagnetic mass driver used in military applications. Projectiles are imbued with kinetic energy using a series of stacked asynchronous linear induction motors.

METARCH: Highest level of Forerunner ancilla. Each was hyper-advanced and administered significant portions of the ecumene's day-to-day operations through its metarchy: a vast network of subsidiary ancilla and monitors. Less than five were allowed to exist at any one time.

MINER: Forerunner rate responsible for planetary and stellar engineering. Miners broke apart worlds, reformed them, or stripped them bare for raw materials, as needed.

MINISTRIES: Overlapping bureaucracies responsible for executing decisions and interpreting guidance issued by Covenant leadership.

MISSILE PODS: Guided missile systems fitted to most UNSC vessels. Each pod contains between five and thirty cells ready to fire on demand. Missile volleys use cooperative swarm behavior to optimize lethality.

MONITOR: General-purpose Sentinel used as mobile housing for high-tier ancilla.

MYRMIDONS: Forerunner special forces who guarded the Ecumene Council and vital installations. Their rate and dispensation was never definitively established.

MUTATION: Customized biological maturation used by the Forerunners to adopt or advance within a rate.

NAVAL AUTOCANNON: Heavy coilgun turret mounts. These typically fire guided shells against long range targets, and inert kinetic kill rounds at close range. Sometimes referred to as "MiniMACs."

OFFICE OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE (ONI): Primary strategic intelligence agency of the UEG. During the course of the Covenant War it absorbed or destroyed all rival military and civilian organizations and now holds uncontested jurisdiction over espionage activities in the human sphere.

OUTER COLONIES: Originally, colonies founded at the end of slipspace routes with transit times measured in months, or even years, and thus largely excluded from trade and communication with the Inner Colonies. By the 26th century it applied to any permanent installation, colony, or resource outpost located at the periphery of UEG control.

OVERWATCH NETWORK: General term for core security and transit authorities of the Forerunner ecumene. They monitored, rationed, and forbade travel to limit the buildup of reconciliation debt in the galaxy.

PINCH FUSION: Covenant fusion reactors use focused gravity generators to replicate conditions inside the core of stars. Pinch fusion reactors generate an enormous amount of power and plasma, but are volatile

GLOSSARY

PLASMA TORPEDO: Command link-guided projectile surrounded by a superheated plasma sheath. Upon impact the torpedo releases its deadly payload to disrupt energy shielding and melt hull plating.

PRECURSORS: Eldest of the sapient minds in the Milky Way. They had infinite forms, many voices, and singular purpose. The realms they grew and the life they crafted continue on, though they themselves have sunk unto unreachable depths.

PRELATES: Bio-modified San'Shyuum super-soldiers with enhanced nervous systems and musculatures.

PROMETHEANS: An elite force of Forerunner Warrior-Servants bound to the Didact's service. Eventually, they transformed themselves into Knights using the Composer, rendering them immune to the Flood at the cost of their free will and memories.

RATIONAL JOURNEY: Slipspace travel over optimal—or near optimal—routes. Usually only possible with Forerunner navigation techniques.

RECONCILIATION DEBT: Space-time damage caused by causality violations and paradoxes resulting from FTL technology. Individual ships accumulate significant debt during slipspace travel and diffuse it upon reentering realspace; if local debt is too high the ship may be destroyed on arrival. Overall reconciliation debt in the galaxy was extremely high during the apex of Forerunner power due to the sheer scale of the ecumene's activities.

REPULSOR ENGINE: Covenant diametric drive, which creates asymmetrical gravity fields that push and pull a ship through space without the need for reaction mass or conventional exhaust. They are an extremely advanced application of gravitics.

SACRED RINGS: Covenant terminology referring to the Halo Array. Specifically, the configuration of the Array they believed would complete the Great Journey.

SANGHEILI (ELITES): Sinewy and muscular saurian species who lead the Covenant's military. Their culture emphasizes martial virtue, producing disciplined and proficient combatants. Following the Great Schism, they have broken into competing factions.

SAN'SHYUUM (PROPHETS): Founders of the Covenant who occupy ministerial and clerical positions as the ruling caste. Low genetic diversity resulted in a rather frail species, though individual lifespans and health are often exceptional. Most San'Shyuum were killed during the Great Schism, but an unknown number escaped, disappearing beyond the fringes of Covenant space.

SAPIENT: High-order thinking life capable of symbolism and abstraction.

SENTIENT: Low-order thinking life.

SENTINEL: Forerunner machine-servant. Many varieties exist, and most serve non-military roles.

SHAW-FUJIKAWA TRANSLIGHT ENGINE (SFTE): Human slipspace drive technology pioneered by Tobias Shaw and Wallace Fujikawa in the 23rd century.

SHIELD WORLD: Forerunner megastructure created to protect against the Flood and the effects of Halo. Most were relatively small "Dyson spheres" built around artificial suns.

SHIP DIRECTOR: Primary AI assigned to manage and administer a human ship's routine operations. By tradition they are treated as a member of the crew, and can direct ship personnel on the captain's authority. On UNSC vessels the ship director is often a smart AI.

SHIPMASTER: Lord of a Covenant ship. They answer only to the fleet's Supreme Commander and serve at his pleasure. Shipmaster duties are analogous to those of human captains.

SLIPSPACE: General term for a subset of alternate dimensions that can be utilized for faster-than-light travel and communication.

SLIP TERMINATION: Catastrophic failure of a slipspace drive during activation. Usually attributed to poor maintenance or improperly calibrated power supplies, known as a Slip Termination, Preventable (STP).

SPARTAN: Cybernetically enhanced and biologically augmented human super-soldier.

SPEAR: General term for nuclear shaped-charge warheads fitted to UNSC anti-ship missiles late in the Covenant War. Spears use a fusion bomb to create and accelerate a plasma jet to relativistic velocities. Also known as a Casaba Howitzer.

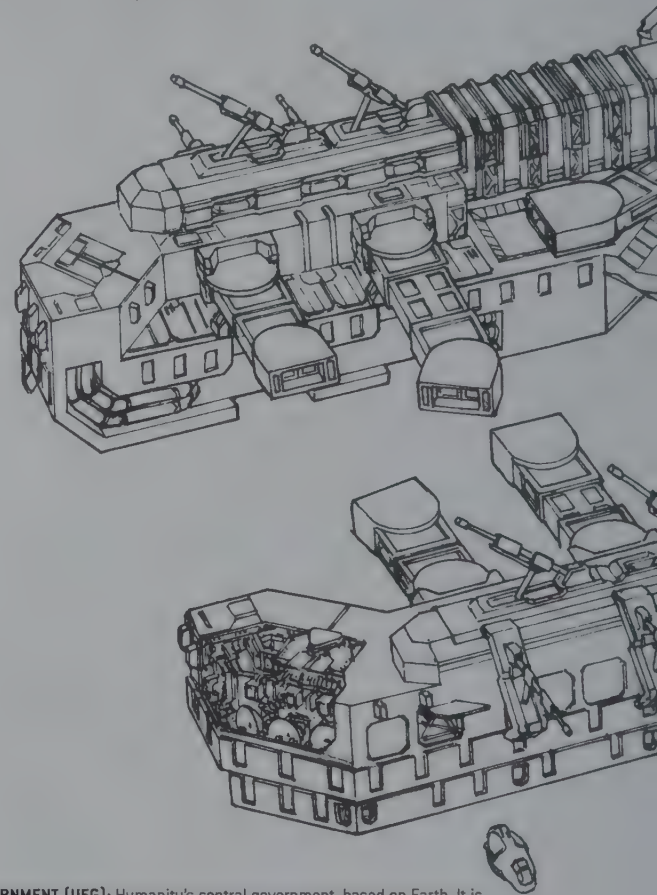
STAR ROAD: Untouchable and perpetual filament of neurophysical energy woven between dimensions by the Precursors. Their shadows in realspace took the appearance of multi-kilometer-thick filaments of strange matter. Rendered inert with the passing of the Precursors, the Gravemind reactivated the star roads to transport plague fleets, moved filaments to crush Forerunner fortifications, and dredged up forgotten artifacts anchored in the deepest layers of unreality to cleanse entire star clusters of life. The star roads splintered when Halo fired.

STRIKECRAFT: Covenant subluminal, multi-phase interdiction vehicles. Functionally equivalent to human fighter-bombers and interceptors.

SUPREME COMMANDER: Covenant fleetmaster appointed by the Hierarchs to lead major military expeditions. The position is analogous to humanity's Fleet Admirals, but with considerably more autonomy.

TORSION PLATE: Forerunner subluminal drive that converts vacuum energy directly into thrust. Stores of exotic matter can be added as reaction mass, greatly increasing acceleration.

UNGGOY (GRUNTS): Methane-breathing pseudo-arthropods that occupy menial roles in the Covenant. Grunts serve whomever can enforce discipline and order.



UNIFIED EARTH GOVERNMENT (UEG): Humanity's central government, based on Earth. It is a representative democracy, though military and corporate interests have significant influence.

UNITED NATIONS SPACE COMMAND (UNSC): Military arm of the UEG, established in 2164. Following the Covenant War it has five branches of service: Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Spartan.

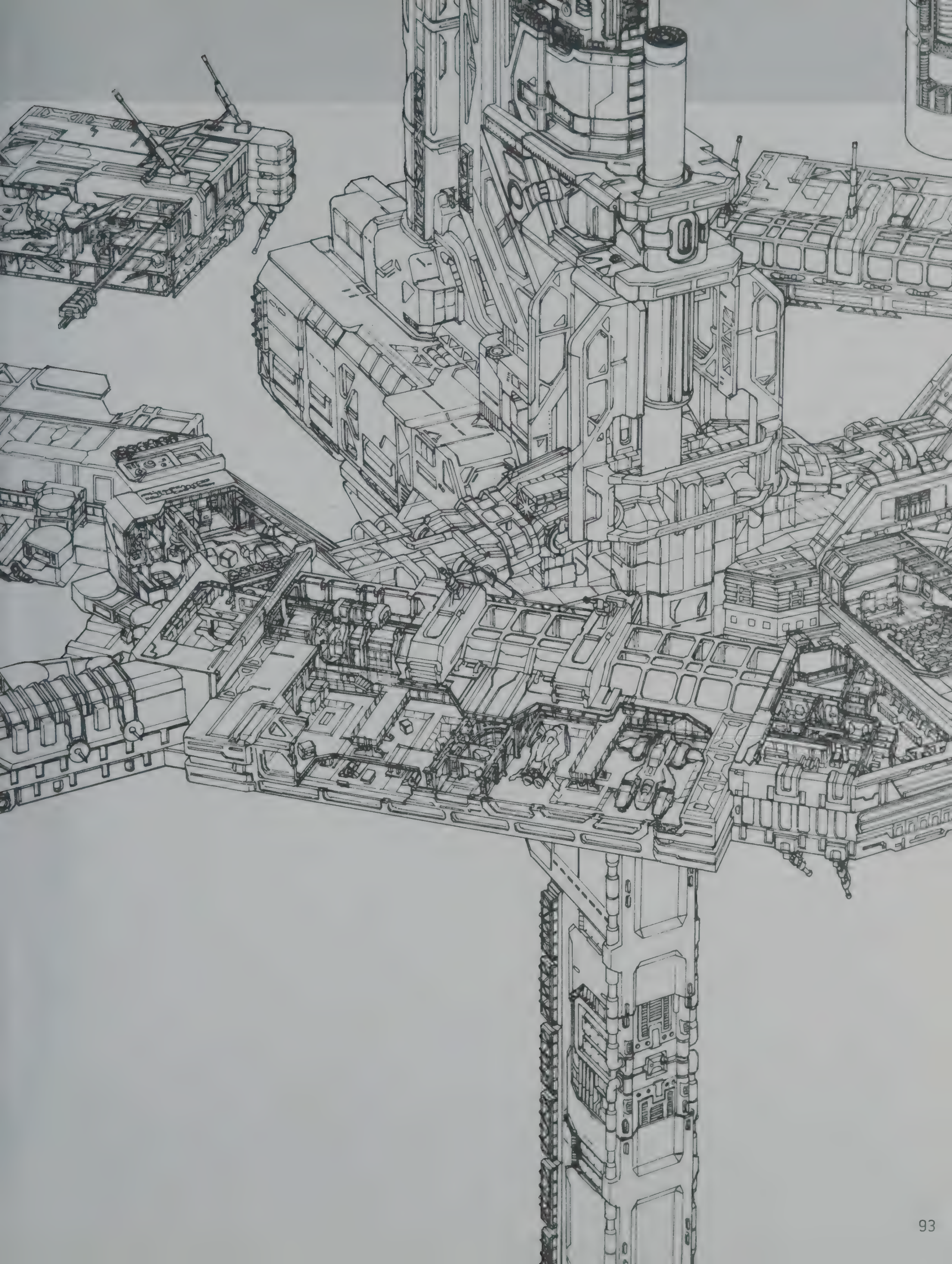
VISUAL INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM, RECONNAISSANCE (VISR): Integrated data management system and heads-up display software and hardware used by the UNSC. Provides contextual augmented reality overlays, information deconfliction, and enhanced situational awareness.

WAR SPHINX: Forerunner manned combat vehicle that reconfigures its structure and weapons layout for optimal performance in any environment.

WARRIOR-SERVANT: Forerunner rate responsible for the defense of the ecumene.

WAVESPACE: Layers of slipspace with proximate terminations, through which communication signals can be routed.

WEAPON-SHIP: Auxiliary combat spacecraft deployed in Forerunner naval warfare.



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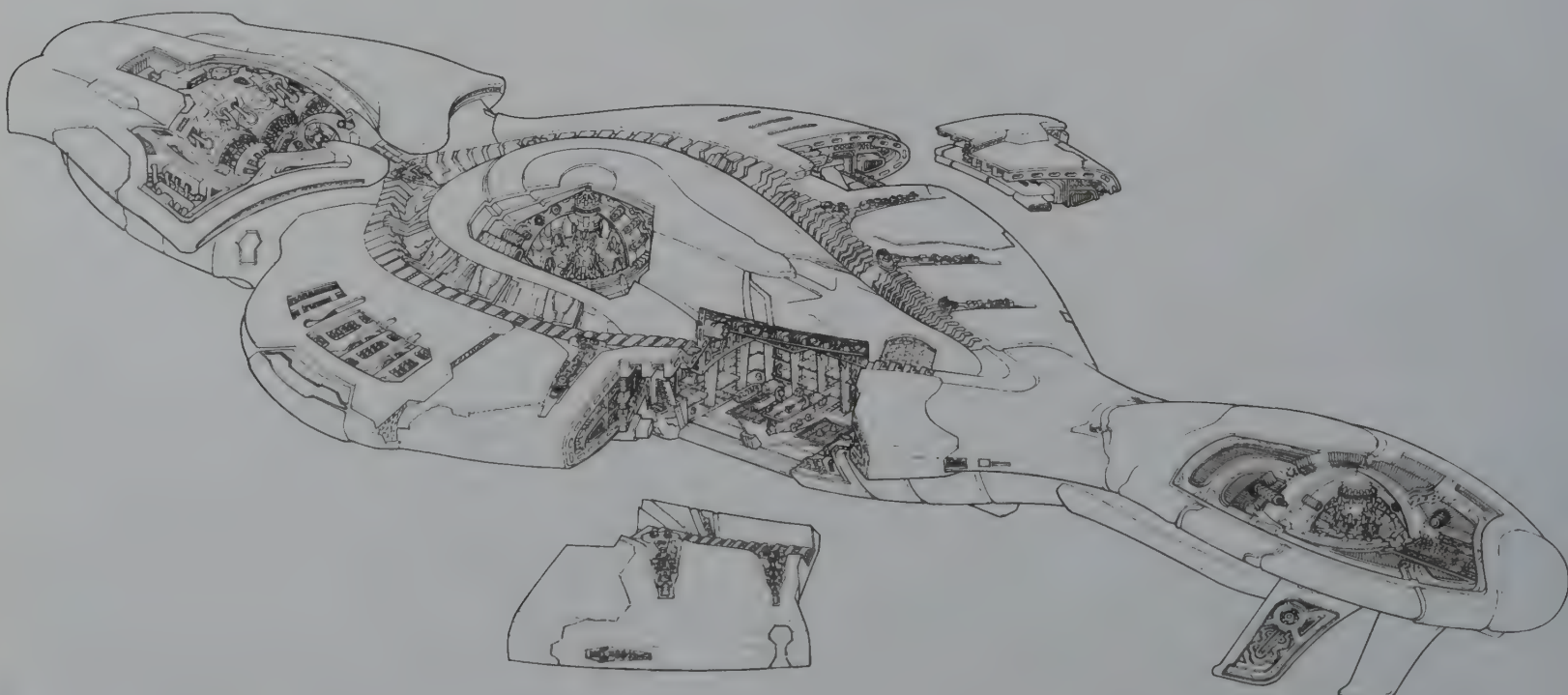
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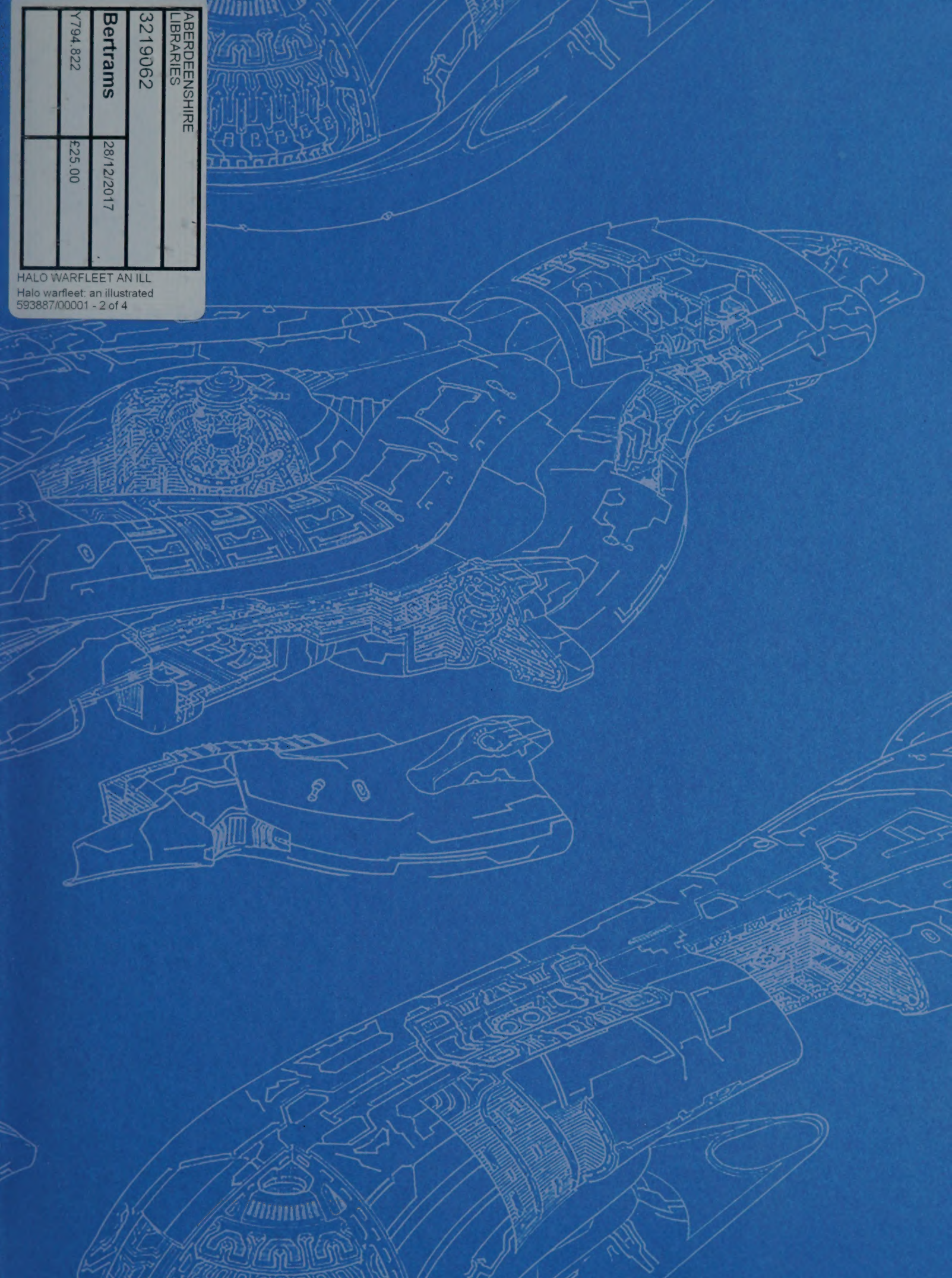
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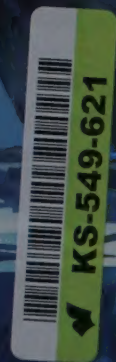


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